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A Voyage

TO THE

EASTERN PART OF TERRA FIRMA,

OR THE

SPANISH MAIN,

IN

SOUTH AMERICA,

DURING THE YEARS 1801, 1802, 1803, AND 1804.

CONTAINING

A description of the Territory under the jurisdiction of the Captain-general of Caraccas, composed of the Provinces of Venezuela, Maracaibo, Varinas, Spanish Guiana, Cumana, and the Island of Margaritta; and embracing every thing relative to the Discovery, Conquest, Topography, Legislation, Commerce, Finance, Inhabitants and Productions of the Provinces, together with a view of the manners and customs of the Spaniards, and the savage as well as civilized Indians.

BY *François* F. DEPONS,

LATE AGENT OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AT CARACCAS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

WITH A LARGE MAP OF THE COUNTRY, &c.

TRANSLATED BY AN AMERICAN GENTLEMAN.

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED BY AND FOR I. RILEY AND CO.

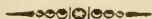
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District of }
New-York, } ss. **B**E IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-se-
cond day of September, in the thirty-first year
of the Independence of the United States of America, ISAAC RILEY,
of t he said District, hath deposited in this office, the Title of a Book,
the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words and figures
following, to wit:

“ A Voyage to the Eastern part of Terra Firma, or the Spanish Main,
“ in South America, during the years 1801, 1802, 1803, and 1804, con-
“ taining a description of the Territory under the jurisdiction of the
“ Captain-General of Caraccas, composed of the provinces of Venezue-
“ la, Maracaibo, Varinas, Spanish Guiana, Cumana and the Island of
“ Margareta; and embracing every thing relative to the Discovery,
“ Conquest, Topography, Legislation, Commerce, Finance, Inhabi-
“ tants and Productions of the Provinces, together with a view of the
“ manners and customs of the Spaniards, and the savage as well as
“ civilized Indians, by F. DEPONS, late agent of the French Govern-
“ ment at Caraccas, in three volumes, with a large Map of the country,
“ &c. translated by an American Gentleman.”



IN CONFORMITY to the Act of the Congress of the United States, en-
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“ Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors
“ of such Copies, during the times therein mentioned ;” and also to an
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“ the Arts of Designing, Engraving and Etching historical and other
“ prints.”

EDWARD DUNSCOMB,
Clerk of the District of New-York.





A
VOYAGE
TO THE
EASTERN PART OF TERRA FIRMA,
IN
SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER V.

CIVIL AND MILITARY ORGANIZATION.

Origin of Conquest—Sovereignty of Spain established in America—Examination of the Spanish regime—Council of the Indies—Its privileges—Representative of the king—His powers—His duties—His privileges and the duration of his office—Succession of the government—Account rendered by the representative of the king at the expiration of his office—Royal audience—Its establishment at Caracas—How composed—Its costume—Its sittings—Measures to expedite the proceedings of the audiences—Consideration in which the audiences are held—Duties imposed on their members—Prerogative of the audiences—Cabildos—Their establishment in Spain—Similar in America—Their excessive power—Usurpation—Restraint—Their composition—Elections—Their privileges—Lieutenants of justice—Other tribunals—Military *Fuero*—Complication of judiciary forms—Facility of exceptions—Reflections on the Spanish Laws—Armed force—Defence of Sea-ports—Debarkation on the coasts—Organization of the armed force—Troops of the line—How composed and paid—Militia.

Origin of Conquest.

THE history of every country proves that in all ages conquest has been the mania of mankind. Inconvenience of situation, barrenness of soil, the desire of a better climate, have been the primary motives. These were soon succeeded by ambition, jealousy, hatred; and what was at first necessity was not slow in becoming passion.

The boundary which separates justice from injustice being as yet imperceptible, perhaps not even tra-

ced, each nation believed that power constituted right, and directed its actions by this principle so destructive to empires. Every thing was considered lawful which promised success ; and, in the event, public censure even fell upon the vanquished. That nation which attempted conquest to obtain a better soil, marched in a body toward the coveted country ; and in their progress, like a torrent which overwhelms every thing, committed acts of ferocity which barbarians alone could conceive and execute. Such were the Goths who, disgusted with their residence in the marshes between the northern ocean and the Baltic sea, proceeded, with their king Filimer at their head, to the environs of the Vistula, thence to the Palus Mæotis ; and finally, ravaging Macedonia, Greece, Dalmatia and Italy, established themselves in Languedoc. One party passed into Spain, but the Moors, as warlike as themselves, soon expelled them from the country

The enterprise of the Goths was imitated by the Vandals, Sarmatians, Huns, Franks, Germans, Saxons, &c. who inundated all the south of Europe and founded states which in the progress of time have assumed their present forms and boundaries.

Those conquests which had for their object the aggrandizement of states, or the imposition of tribute, were undertaken, like those of our day, with powerful armies composed of the flower of the nation. Thus Sesostris at the head of six hundred thousand infantry and twenty-four thousand cavalry, carried terror, captivity, pillage and death beyond the Ganges.

Thus Philip of Macedon, Alexander, and the Romans, augmented their power by the acquisition of new domains ; and thus modern nations seek to increase their strength by every accession the chance of arms places within their power.

But no achievement on the ancient continent bears resemblance to what the Spaniards have accomplished in the new. Without forces and without expense, they obtained possession of a country twice the size of Europe, notwithstanding the opposition and resistance of the natives, whose number, compared to that of their conquerors, was in the proportion of four thousand to one.

Spanish Sovereignty established in America.

This conquest, however marvellous, does not so much captivate the imagination, as the establishment of the sovereignty of Spain over countries so vast, and on a foundation so solid that, far from having been shaken by three ages of existence, they appear on the contrary to be confirmed beyond the power of change.

What policy, what wisdom, what address must have been requisite, to bring into dependence, regions, several of which were distant three or four thousand leagues, and of which the greater part had the less reciprocity of wants with Spain, as they gathered the same fruits and the same grain that Europe produced. It cannot even be said that Spain has drawn any assistance from ancient or modern legisla-

tion, for the government of its colonies : since it was the first power that formed such establishments. It is therefore exclusively entitled to the whole merit of its success. We are struck with astonishment in comparing the manner in which Spain governs her American possessions, with that employed by other powers to govern theirs. We perceive that by expedients entirely different, she has obtained results at least equally favourable to her sovereignty.

France, for instance, has adopted as the basis of her system, that the colonies shall be considered, both by the European and the Creole, merely as places of temporary residence, to which individuals should be attracted by the facility of acquiring a fortune, and from which they should depart as soon as that object was accomplished. Spain, on the contrary, permits that all her subjects, American or European, may regard as their country any part of the empire that has given them birth, or which has for them any peculiar attractions.

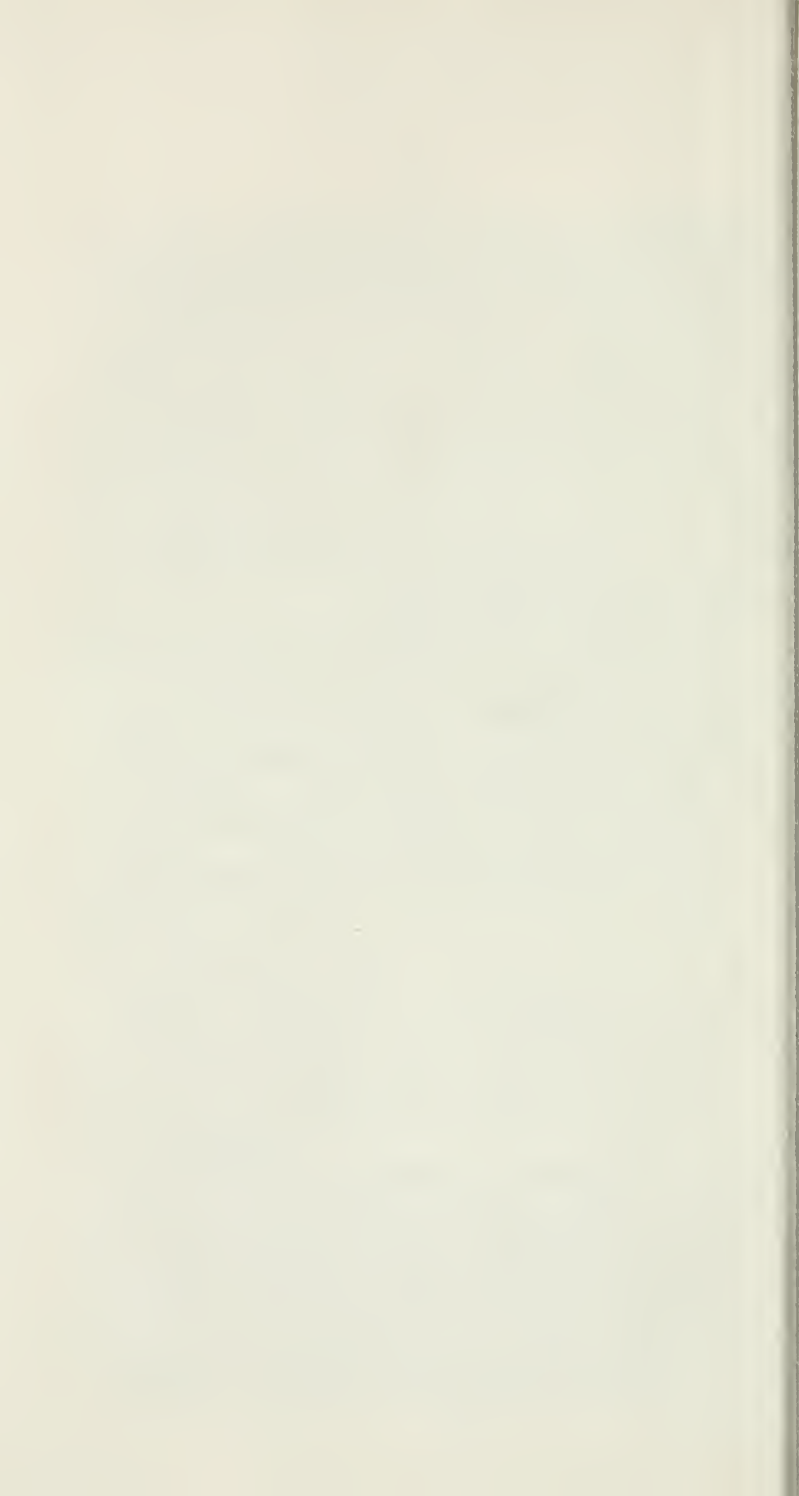
In the French colonies every thing appertains to cultivation or commerce ; each individual must be either a planter or a merchant. In the Spanish possessions, one may embrace any situation of life either civil or religious.

The French Creole who has an inclination for the bar, the church, or the solitude of the cloister ; for arms, or for medicine ; cannot be gratified but in the metropolis : for in the colonies there are neither universities, nor faculties of law or of medicine, nor seminaries ; neither bishoprics, nor canonries, nor

prebendaries; neither convents, nor military schools. For the services of religion there is but one missionary in each parish; and all the military consists of regiments entirely composed of Europeans. The Spanish Creole may, without change of residence, give to his ambition that direction which he believes most advantageous, and which is best adapted to his taste. I do not pretend that the local prosperity is not greater; I only endeavour to prove that the sovereignty of the metropolis is not less.

The important trusts, the honors, even the consideration attached to the order of nobility, are but rarely granted out of France. It is necessary to return wealthy into the country to find those enjoyments so agreeable to pride which riches furnish. The Spanish government does not find it inconvenient to extend into its remote possessions, nearly the same honors, favours and distinctions as in Europe; and to individuals who have never been out of America.

It is apparent that France employs every expedient to direct constantly toward the mother country the wishes, and the affections, of all who go to the colonies, or who are born there: it is believed, and with reason, that the more a person considers himself as a stranger, the less will he be inclined to establish himself there. These precautions extend so far as not to permit the Creole children to receive, in the colonies, any other education than is given by teachers, called schoolmasters, who instruct them to read, to write, and to cypher. There are no colleges for their studies, no schools of mathematics, drawing, painting





or riding : it was the wish of government to compel parents to send their children early to France, that they might imbibe impressions favourable to the system of the parent state ; a system so well established that there is not a single white inhabitant in the French colonies, who is not desirous to leave them. It is a truth that the happiest day to a Frenchman absent from his country, is the day of his return. The Spanish government has believed that it might neglect all these expedients : it trusts, for the formation and the strengthening of the ties of its colonies, to the combination of their laws and the style of their government : experience has proved the calculation just. The organization of this astonishing machine, which occasions it to move thus equably on springs at so great a distance, and in countries dissimilar in climate, inhabitants and productions, is doubtless a master-piece of human skill. Let us cast a glance upon its structure.

Examination of the Spanish regime.

The political and civil constitution of the Spanish possessions in the new world, has doubtless been the work of time : it was beyond human power to form, at the instant of discovery, a complete code for regions till then unknown, and for establishments of a nature so novel that neither ancient nor modern times furnish an example of the kind.

The idea of making these vast countries domains of the Spanish crown, produced naturally the establishment of the same constituted authorities as in the

mother-country. The charge of maintaining the Spanish sovereignty, and of commanding the armed force, was confided to chiefs under the title of *vice-roys* or *captains-general*.

The whole of the Spanish possessions in America is divided into four vice-royalties: Mexico, Peru, Buenos Ayres, and Santa-Fé; and six *capitanerías*: Porto-Rico, Havanna, Caraccas, Guatimala, Chili, and the Philippine Islands in Asia.

The police was entrusted, as in Spain, to the vigilance of *cabildos*. At first they were placed in the smallest villages. The original population of the new town did not sometimes exceed thirty persons, when they began to build a church; and to establish a *cabildo*; but after a century it was found that the place had become of sufficient consequence to require *alcades* and *regidores*.

For the administration of justice, *audiencias* were created, which at present are thirteen in number. They have their sittings at Mexico, Guadalaxara, Guatimala, the isle of Cuba, Lima, Charcas, Chili, Santa Fé, Quito, Buenos Ayres, Caraccas, Cusco, and the Philippines. Finally, the christian religion obtained bishops, chapters, and convents. There are seven archbishops, who have thirty-seven suffragans.

The powers of these different authorities have received extension or restriction as experience seemed to require. The governors-general, the immediate depositaries of royal authority, possessed too great opportunity of abusing that distinguished prerogative.



It has been found requisite to protect Spain against their personal ambition, and the citizens against the possibility of vexatious oppressions. This has been effected, but without impairing the authority of doing every thing in the name of the sovereign.

The cabildos, necessarily composed of Creoles, or of Spaniards destined to pass their lives in America, preserve a recollection of the mother country too confined to make them prefer its interests to those of the new soil upon which they have established themselves. The cabildos, in whose eyes the rights of Old Spain are more embarrassing than respectable, cannot but make a dangerous use for her sovereignty, of that authority which the general laws give them : it has been found necessary, therefore, to restrain their powers, and to discourage the establishment of them in new villages.

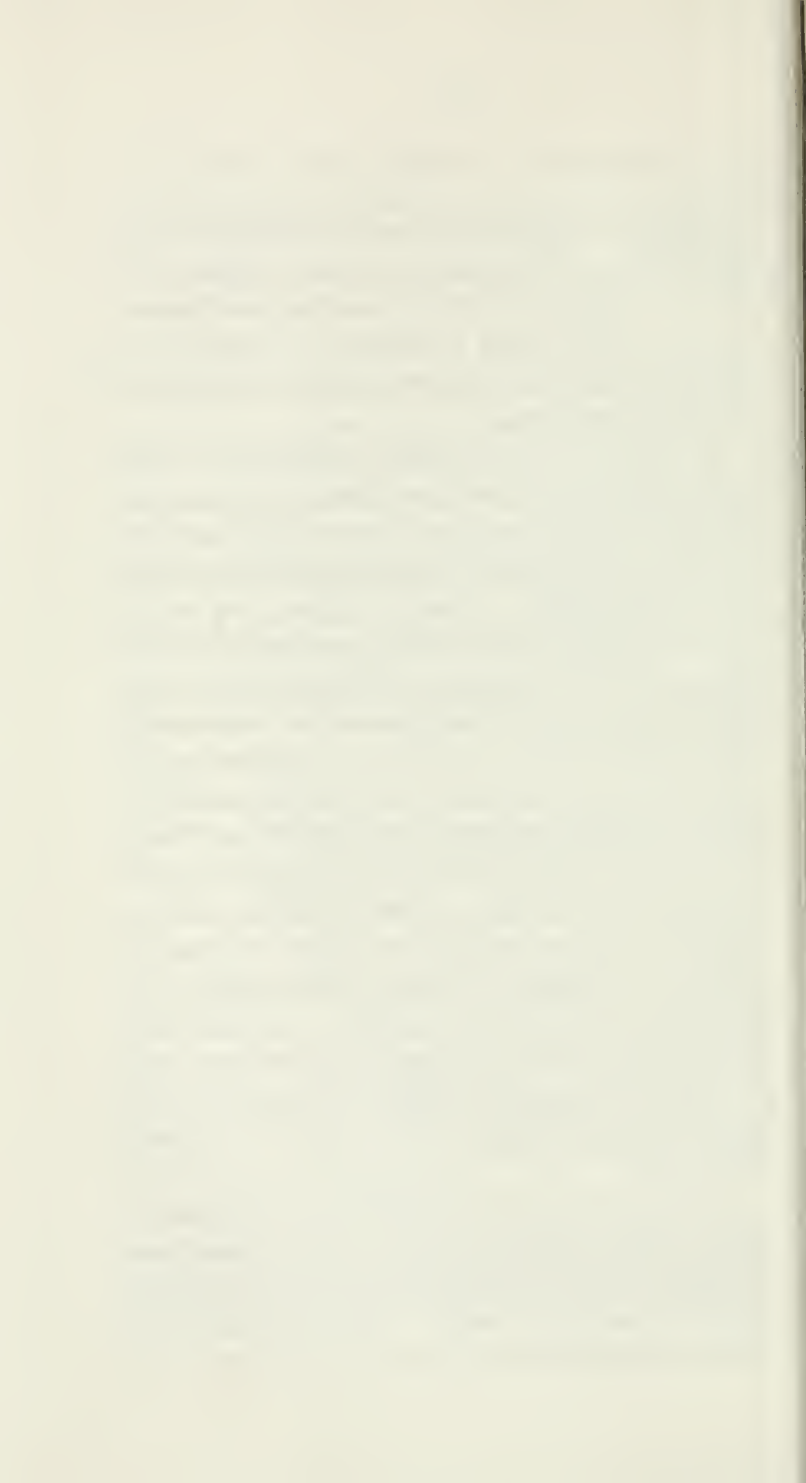
It is not the same with the audiences : their members all receive pay from the king, they have no favours or superior stations to hope for but from the throne ; and the law does not leave to their disposal any effective force, that might be productive of injury to Spain. It could not, therefore, be otherwise than useful to invest these superior tribunals with great power and respectability : for in them reside the means of checking the effects of ambition in a chief, and the injustice he might commit without this salutary counterpoise.

Religion, by the morality which forms its basis, contributes also to cement the royal authority in Spanish America. It is a resource of which policy has

availed itself with great address. Ministers, bishops and priests are in numerous instances employed with advantage in civil affairs. Even the reins of government are often placed in the hands of prelates; and these periods have ever been the most pacific, if not the most prosperous.

It is manifest that if Spain had introduced her domestic regulations into her American possessions, they would long since have thrown off her dominion, or been torn by factions which would have rendered them uninhabitable. It is the wisdom, the prudence of their particular laws which have made them what they are. From the recent establishment of the colonies it was a natural consequence that many of the laws first enacted should not have been adapted to their situation, and should therefore have sometimes produced effects unexpected and prejudicial. He who travels with no other guide than the cardinal points, in an unknown country, where there is neither road nor path, is often compelled to retrace his steps; he advances but slowly and with extreme fatigue. It was thus with the Spanish legislator. He well knew the point he would attain, but he had only reason for his guide, and we must declare to his praise, that it has conducted him across the desert to his proposed destination.

All the laws of the West Indies, which have been found useful in execution, have been collected, and form the code of the Spanish possessions, under the title of *Laws of the Indies*. They are punctually followed in all cases in which they have not been varied



by subsequent statutes. Where they are silent the laws of the realm are observed, termed *Leyes de partidas*.

Council of the Indies.

This system, worthy of admiration for the deep root it has given to the royal authority in America, has been entirely effected by the council of the Indies. Government, whose sagacity is honoured by this establishment, had no sooner recognized the necessity of a legislation for the West-Indies, different from that of Spain, than it confided the supreme administration of affairs in the new world to a council, whose duty it was to form and cement the relations of the mother country with the colonies. This respectable tribunal, to which the Spanish throne owes most of its splendour, takes date from 1511. The great qualifications requisite to become a member, and the constant attention that is given to make it a species of honourable retreat for personages who fill the first stations in America, have acquired for this tribunal a consideration so much the more merited, as its decisions have ever borne the stamp of impartiality, wisdom and experience.

Its authority extends without exception to every thing that relates to the West-Indies. It has cognizance by means of an appeal, termed by the Spaniards, *recurso*, of causes decided by the audiences. All its deliberations are taken by plurality of voices, except the repeal of laws. In these cases the constitution requires two thirds.

The presentation to all important stations, civil and ecclesiastical, the reward of those employed whose merits are conspicuous, the police of the tribunals, military establishment, finances, commerce, all have their source in the council of the Indies. Its power, which has never been abused, has always been augmenting, and is at present so great that it holds in check all Spanish America.

Its integrity so effectually disconcerts intrigue that every Spaniard, wealthy and powerful, who in his cause or his pretensions has more to hope from favour than from justice, directs all his efforts to avoid the jurisdiction of the council of the Indies. His only hope of success rests on bringing his cause to the decision of the ministers whom it is incomparably more easy to deceive.*

If the Spaniards have an advantage over us in possessing a permanent corps, which watches incessantly

* The homage I render to the council of the Indies is entitled to more consideration, as when the misfortunes of St Domingo obliged me to pass into the Spanish dominions, I arrived with a prepossession against the council, produced by the works of celebrated writers, particularly the Abbe Millot, who in his political and military memoirs says: "there are abuses in all the councils of Spain, and in that of the Indies more than in any other; instead of punishing malversations, they support the culpable in proportion to the presents received from them." During twelve successive years that I have been within the limits of their jurisdiction, I have seen cause to applaud all their decisions: nor can I cite a single instance of corruption or of favour. The oppressed, whatever may be the credit of his oppressor, regards his cause as gained, when he is certain that it will be carried to the council of the Indies. It is necessary to have resided among the Spaniards of America, to know the veneration in which this august tribunal is held.



over their colonies, we have that of a better organization in the ministry. Every thing that relates to our colonies, whether in regard to laws, war, justice, police, or finances, is sent by the same minister of the marine and of the colonies; and to him also every thing that concerns them is addressed. In Spain, on the contrary, the minister of war has all the military correspondence of the Indies; the minister of the *real hacienda* that of the finances &c. This multiplicity of channels is rendered the more injurious, as the king forbids the execution of any order that does not come from the minister of that particular department. It follows that the king frequently gives orders through the minister of war, which are not executed by the intendants or their deputies, if they are not at the same time addressed by the minister of the *real hacienda*, or of the finances. For example, the king gives orders to repair certain fortifications or to construct new, to purchase or to build some edifice, at his pleasure. If the minister of the *real hacienda* does not send an order to defray the expenses, the will of the king remains uncomplished. In the beginning of 1802 the order of the king, through the minister at war, came to Caraccas, for the forming a secretaryship better suited to the important office of captain-general, as well for the number and pay of those employed, as for the respectability of the establishment. The minister of the *real hacienda* was silent, and his silence delayed for more than a year this necessary reform. It is difficult to cite a single case in which this division can be useful, but a thousand may be readily noticed

in which the most injurious consequences may result. Where there is an unison of will, there must be an unison of action, without which there exists a want of concert that must ever produce injurious effects.

Representative of the King.

The king is immediately represented in the general government of Venezuela, and its dependencies, by a captain-general, who is also governor and president of the royal audience and of all the tribunals, excepting those which relate to the royal treasures, and to commerce.

His Powers.

In the former capacity his authority extends over the whole province of Venezuela, and also those of Maracaibo, Varinas, Guiana, Cumana, and the isle of Margaritta. Every thing relating to fortifications, arms, defence of the country, and, in a word, the whole military establishment, is immediately under his orders. He may order every thing without the concurrence or counsel of any one, but he generally submits every case of importance to an assembly or commission, composed of the first military officers. This council is termed *Junta de Guerra*.

In his quality of captain-general he is exclusively charged with all political relations between the colonial governments of foreign powers, and his particular district.



As governor, his authority is circumscribed to the province of Venezuela ; yet, a commander has lately been appointed at Venezuela who exercises the functions of governor in a district formed in the south-western part of that same province. Cumana, Guiana, Maracaibo and the isle of Margareta have also their respective governors, who, in civil affairs, possess the same powers in their provinces that the governor of Caraccas exercises in his. They are appointed for five years.. These governors also enjoy, each in his own district, the prerogatives of vice-patrons. They have cognizance, in the first instance, of all civil and criminal affairs in the places of their residence ; but to obviate the defects which would unavoidably result from a want of that knowledge, which can only be acquired by means the reverse of those which form the good soldier, the law obliges them to use the assistance, in all judicial affairs, of a counsellor at law, who records and signs the sentences. He has the title of assistant. He is appointed and paid by the king, independent of the perquisites he receives in those causes which pass under his notice. The sentences have no validity without the signature of the governor. If they appear to him contrary to justice, or to political convenience, he can pass the documents to another person, termed assistant *ad hoc*, who furnishes a new sentence. The governor has even the ability of giving a decision contrary to the advice of these legal counsellors ; but he only employs it in cases where so extraordinary a measure may be readily justified.

To all these prerogatives of chief of the public authority, he adds that of presiding at the audience.— Happily the legislator has wisely guarded against any abuse that might result from his influence in the only tribunal that is permitted to investigate his actions. By the means which the law has provided, this privilege, on the first glance so dangerous to public liberty, becomes on the contrary its support. For in rendering it purely honorary a double advantage has been obtained. The representative of the king is invested with a respectability that maintains the majesty of the throne, reflected in him as in a mirror ; yet without any augmentation of his power.

The president assists at the sittings of the audience whenever he pleases, and visits it at any hour, the tribunal being in session. If he announces to the audience his intention, a deputation is sent to accompany him from the palace of government to that of justice. He generally dispenses with this ceremony by not apprising them. On his arrival the guard turns out under arms, and a person in a loud voice announces *The President !* All the advocates, attorneys, registers and notaries of the audience present themselves to receive him and ascend in his *suite*.— The whole audience rise and receive him at the door of the chamber. He is conducted to his chair, and it is not until after he is seated, and in virtue of his permission, that the members of the audience resume their seats. After the sitting, all the members of the audience, the regent, oidors, and fiscal, accompany the president to his palace, and to the door of his apartment.



This ceremonial would indicate that the president rarely attends the audience, or that he exercises over it a command very prejudicial to the liberty of opinion. The first idea has been contradicted by the practice of several presidents. I am a witness that the captain-general of Caraccas, Don Manuel de Guevara Vasconcelos, never failed to attend the audience, unless prevented by urgent affairs of government. The second suggestion is not less erroneous, since the president has neither a deliberative nor a consulting voice. He may see and hear, but must be silent, unless some scandalous infraction of forms compel him to speak. The law has willed that this species of superintendence, or watchfulness, should remind the judge of his duties, but without constraining the exercise of his conscience in the decision of affairs.

His Duties.

In consequence of this superintendence, the presidents can render to the council of the Indies, an account of all contraventions of laws which the members of the audiences may commit, either in their official functions or in private life ; but every complaint must be accompanied with satisfactory documents. They may even direct secret inquests against any member of the audience whose conduct has excited suspicion.

The governor, president, or captain-general, has an indisputable right to take, in cases not provided for by law, such measures as he may conceive proper for the public safety, or the police of cities. But

the responsibility which ever follows him, sufficiently advises him of the danger he would incur in making too absolute a use of this privilege ; if he acts with prudence, he will, in all cases of a delicate nature, obtain such information as will always protect him against injurious results.

His powers are great, and the law chuses that they should appear still greater than they are. To the eyes of the vulgar, who confound honours with power he can do what he pleases. In the eyes of the law he can only do what is just, what is reasonable. His ambition and his despotism are restrained by the rigid account he must give of his proceedings at the expiration of his office.

The constitution of the Indies has neglected nothing to make these images of the king independent, by rendering them in some sort strangers in the countries they govern. All their affections are fettered. They cannot possess, within the boundaries of their government, for their visible property, more than four slaves : they are prohibited from commerce and from marriage : they and their children are forbidden to attend weddings or interments, or to present infants at the baptismal fount.

It is evident that these prohibitions are intended to deprive them of all those relations which might give a bias to that impartiality so essential in him who commands ; without which he soon acquires a partiality for individuals, and is not slow to commit acts of injustice. Even the preferences accorded by predilection, announce the oppression those may expect who are objects of dislike. It is necessary to be more than human, to plunge into the torrent of the

passions without being borne away by them. The laws in this respect are therefore excellent, and their precautions admirable. Is the object accomplished? This is a question which I must leave undecided.

His appointments.—Duration of his Office.

The appointments of the captain-general of Caracas, are 9,000 dollars per annum. What arises from his deciding causes in the first instance, and the other perquisites attached to his station, nearly double that sum. His term of office is seven years: it is never extended, but tacitly, or by circumstances of war, or other events, which prevent the appearance of his successor.

Succession of the Government.

In the event of sickness, he may resign the command to him whom the law specifies; but as soon as he has received the sacraments, he has no longer a choice. The general command passes then in full authority to the successor provided by law, and he cannot resume it unless he should recover his health.

We have said that the captains-general must render, immediately after quitting their stations, and even in the same place in which they have filled them, a severe account of the use they have made of their powers. The form in which this account is rendered is sufficiently curious to be related, and sufficiently good to receive imitation. The Spaniards call this act *dar residencia*, to give the *residence*.

Account rendered by the King's Representative, at the expiration of his Office.

An absolute chief, who knows no superior authority, within two or three thousand leagues, and who holds from the law an unlimited power, has dangerous means to oppress and to vex the citizens, if they have no other resource than the ordinary avenues of justice. The credit and the riches he would have acquired by the very abuse of his power, would enable him to brave with facility those tedious and expensive pursuits, which the poor, upon whom the weight of injustice falls, would neither dare to undertake, nor be able to sustain.

On the other hand, to make a governor-general liable to prosecutions, during his office, was to expose him, in particular among a people attached to litigation, as a mark for the restless jealousy of those who owed him obedience. It would be to provide a fountain of chicaneries and vexations, which would soon deprive his authority of that respect, with which it was the interest of the Spanish sovereignty to invest it. It therefore became requisite to adopt some expedient which should leave to the chief all his powers, the full ability of action during the exercise of his functions, and yet restrain him within the limits of justice. It was impossible to find one better calculated to accomplish this great object than the imposing perspective of a tribunal, expressly constituted to detect and to punish his errors. This institution, the best safeguard of the citizen against arbitrary acts of every description, does honour to the sagacity of him who

conceived the idea, to the solicitude for his subjects of the king who adopted it, and to the wisdom of the monarch by whom it is continued.

When a viceroy or governor is to be replaced, the council of the Indies, immediately after the nomination of a new titular, present three persons, to one of whom the king gives a commission to receive the *residence*, of the late viceroy or governor. The choice usually falls on a legal character resident in America.

The commissary of the residence repairs to the capital of the government. He announces by banns and by placards the particular day on which the tribunal of the residence of the late viceroy or governor will be formed, and the house it will occupy: inviting citizens of all orders, classes, and conditions, who may have complaints against the said viceroy or governor, to attend and give in their declarations, that justice may be done. This publication must be made in such manner that no person can be ignorant of it. One statute of 9 October 1556, orders that it shall in particular be made known to the Indians, that they may demand reparation for any wrongs they may have suffered.

The *residence* of governors continues sixty days, and the complaints must be tried within sixty other days, counting from the day on which they were made. The residence of viceroys is six months.—After these periods, no further complaints are admitted. The proceedings of the residence of viceroys, governors, &c. are forwarded to the council of the Indias, who decide on them definitively.

During a long time all public functionaries had to undergo the proof of the residence; but by *cedule* (or decree) of the 4th of August, 1799, alcades, regidores, alguazils, attornies, &c. have been exempted: viceroys, presidents, governors political and military, intendants of armies, and intendants corregidores, are alone subjected to this test.

This obligation is so rigidly enforced, that none of these officers can occupy a new station, without presenting to the authority which puts him in possession, a certificate, showing that no charge has been substantiated against him in regard to his former employ.

I request the reader not to infer from my opinion of the tribunals of residence, my confidence in their efficacy. My homage is immediately and solely addressed to the wisdom of the law. I resign all criticism on its operation, to those who know the seductive influence of Plutus over the feeble and pliant Themis.

The representative of royal authority, and his concerns having been described, we necessarily proceed to notice that high tribunal in which resides the exclusive administration of justice in its last resort.

Royal Audience.

The whole district which now forms the audience of Caraccas, appertained to that of St. Domingo, from the discovery of Terra-Firma to the year 1718. At that period the king, having established the new kingdom of Grenada, placed all Terra-Firma in its

district. Caraccas and its dependencies were from that time submitted to the audience of Santa-Fé; but this arrangement appears to have been of short continuance. I have made fruitless endeavours to procure the order of the king by which they were restored to the audience of St. Domingo. The only title my curiosity has discovered is a royal decree of the year 1729, which returns to the audience of St. Domingo the examination of a rule, made in the preceding year, for the rites and ceremonies of the cathedral of Caraccas. From this we can infer, that the jurisdiction of the audience of Santa-Fé over this part of Terra-Firma, had, at most, but ten years duration.

In fact, whether the provinces of Caraccas were under the audience of Santa-Fé, or under that of St. Domingo, it is equally obvious that the great distance of these two courts must have occasioned excessive inconvenience. A complainant could not make himself heard at either tribunal, but by means of long and painful journies, occasioning immense expense, extreme fatigue, and often the loss of life.

Santa-Fé, the capital of the new kingdom of Grenada, is 250 leagues to the south-west of Caraccas. The communication is so difficult, that the established courier, or post, takes 42 days, in the favourable season, to go from one to the other of these cities. St. Domingo is nearly equally distant to the north. Independent of the objections to such removals, the Caribbean Sea, which it is necessary to cross, renders these journies dangerous, particularly in time of war: as well on account of the funds which must be taken

or remitted, as of the papers which necessarily follow the complaint. In addition to these objections, a long time elapsed before the province of Venezuela was sufficiently populous to be entitled to an audience, and sufficiently productive to support the expense. It is therefore astonishing that a measure so long presenting only advantages, should not have been adopted till so recent a period.

Establishment of the Royal Audience at Caraccas.

The audience of Caraccas was established by a royal *cédula* of 1786, which gave to it the same district as the captain-general: viz. the provinces of Venezuela, Maracaibo, Cumana, Varinas, Guiana, and the island of Margareta. It held its first session in 1787.

How Composed.

It is composed of a president, who is the captain-general; a regent at a salary of 5,300 dollars; three oidors at 3,300 each; two fiscals, one for civil and criminal affairs, the other for the finances, at 3,300 each, a single reporter at 500, with perquisites; and an alguazil major without stated salary.

Its Costume.

The official dress of members of the audience consists in a robe of black taffety, in form of a cloak or mantle; the other habiliments are also black. Un-

til of late, they wore, suspended from a button hole, a kind of white wand, which among the Spaniards is a general badge of jurisdiction, and before which all trembled. They are doubtless considered sufficiently potent without the virtue of this talisman; for they carry it no longer.

Its Sessions.

The audience holds its sessions on any day except holidays, (*feries*) from 8 to 11 o'clock in the morning. It tries few causes, has but one reporter, and the forms adopted for his reports consume much time and furnish little instruction. The reporter reads all the papers, and they are always voluminous, however trivial the object in dispute. The cases are very few in which the reading is completed at one sitting. This inconvenient form slackens the course of justice, and gives to the judges a much less clear idea of the question, than would be produced by an abstract made with care and intelligence.

Measures to expedite the proceedings of the Audiences.

The tardiness of judgment, and the accumulation of causes in the tribunals of appeal, induced the king to take measures for restoring to the ministers of justice that consideration of which they had been deprived by complaints against them. It was ordered by cedula of 4th August, 1802, that governors and presidents of audiences shall furnish to the king an accurate statement of all causes before these tribunals, with the

reasons of their suspension. They are to advise, at the same time, as well respecting the incapacity, or wilful negligence of the members, as concerning expedients to regulate the course of justice. According to the same cedula, this statement must be rendered every year. It evidently gives the presidents an influence over the audiences, thus augmenting their authority at the expense of the highest tribunals in the nation.

Consideration in which the Audiences are held.

The audiences are highly respected by the Spaniards, and when the members are men of unquestionable talents and integrity, they are regarded with a degree of submission and reverence, almost amounting to adoration.

Nothing has been neglected by the laws, to banish ignorance, partiality, favouritism, malice and cupidity, from these sanctuaries of justice. An administration, so august is confided only to persons of correct deportment, and upright characters, and who have received those degrees which are, and ought to be, granted solely to learning.

Obligations imposed on Members of the Audiences.

According to the law they should live in retirement, in order that they may not form connections detrimental to the free exercise of their functions. They are not merely excused, but excluded, from being godfathers at a marriage or baptism; and from assist-

ing at weddings or funerals. Neither they, nor their wives, are permitted to associate with merchants, because the legislator considers that class of citizens as the most likely to appeal to the audiences for the recovery of debts, and to be prosecuted by their creditors.

The members of the audiences would even contravene the letter of the law, were they to employ pleaders, or seek their acquaintance. This cautious policy has even gone so far as to interdict their residing with advocates, reporters, or registers. They are not allowed to engage in mercantile speculations, not even to put out money on interest. Lest luxury should open to them the doors of vice, the number of slaves in the service of each *oidor* or member of an audience, is limited to four. The use of horse-cloths, which are very costly trappings in Spain, from the richness and profusion of their embroidery, is also denied them. Wealth can never influence them in their decrees. They are forbidden to borrow, and still less are they to receive presents. No gambling should be suffered in their houses, and their wives should make but few visits. The president is particularly charged to watch that no intimacies, always injurious to the impartial discharge of justice, are formed between the judges and those under their jurisdiction. Among their prohibitions also, are the possession of rented property, and alliances within the district of their audience. These restrictions extend also to their families, as long as they continue members of audiences. All these measures are evidently intended to render these ministers of justice worthy of the high functions assigned them.

Prerogatives of the Audiences.

The tribunals of audience besides the administration of justice in cases of appeal, have also other powers, which constitute them in a manner defenders of the public liberty, and supporters of the royal authority. Every thing is submitted to their jurisdiction, to their censure, to their inspection. To give an idea of the extent of their powers, I need only remark, that the ecclesiastical tribunals are under their controul. They have cognisance of appeals from sentences rendered by the ecclesiastical tribunal. They have the power even of condemning the judges of that tribunal to render satisfaction for their usurpations ; to summon them before the court of the audience, and to detain them there until they exhibit the apostolic letters, which invest them with their authority ; they decide also the disputes between the secular and ecclesiastical tribunals ; in a word, they govern those who govern all the rest.

The king recommends to the viceroys and captains-general, that they should consult the audiences on every extraordinary emergency, or incident of government ; and sundry acts prescribe the same submission to the decisions of the audiences, as if they emanated from the king. The audience of Caraccas devotes, on every Monday and Thursday, an hour, or an hour and a half, after its sittings, to such matters of high administration.

They term his deliberation *acuerdo*. The captain-general is rarely absent, and the fiscal is still more punctual.

These tribunals have the privilege, uncommon in the Indies, of corresponding with the king, without the privacy of the viceroys, presidents or captains-general. They may communicate to his majesty every thing which appears to them important, in matters of government and justice.

When the authority of the president clashes with that of the audience, the latter makes the necessary remonstrances : if those are fruitless, the will of the president is executed, and an appeal made to the king, who never fails to make the transgressor return to the path of the law, and to punish his infractions, according to the importance of the case.

It is to the royal audiences, that the king and the council of the Indies always apply for information in affairs, where the viceroys and governors are at variance. To them also, are confided, all important commissions, with the exception of the military department.

The distinguished place, which the audiences hold in the hierarchy of public authorities, is evident from the right, granted them by the laws of the Indies, of exercising the functions of viceroys and governors, either deceased or absent from the place where the audiences reside. They are then invested with absolute command. The regent, or the oldest *oidor*, represents the head of the vacated executive power ; but all matters of government should be submitted to the deliberations of the audience.

It has latterly, however, been discovered that the confiding the defence and police of a country to men, who, by their situation are naturally deficient in mili-

tary knowledge, presents inconveniencies which the danger of an invasion, or internal troubles, do not fail to augment. It has consequently been thought the most natural and advisable, in case of vacancies, that the general command should devolve upon the military officer who ranks next to the deceased or absent chief. In this manner has it been decided for the provinces of Caraccas, by an order of the king, dated March, 1800, commanding that Don Manuel De Cagigal, brigadier of the armies and lieutenant of the king, should exercise, to the exclusion of the audience, all the functions of Don Manuel De Guevara Vasconcelos, governor, president and captain-general, who was then on his circuit (*en tournée.*)

Nothing manifests more clearly the high consideration with which the king would distinguish the audiences, than the deference to their members, which he exacts from the viceroys and captains-general.— A decree of the 5th September, 1620, ordains that the viceroys treat the oidors *with all the respect due to their characters, as their brethren, and as magistrates whom the king honours with all his confidence.* The same decree observes, that when an Oidor visits the viceroys on public affairs he should be immediately admitted. The viceroys should offer him a seat, and listen to him as a father, a chief, a president, and a protector. In short they salute the audiences with the title of *Highnesses* in all writings presented to them.

The prerogatives of the royal audiences would furnish matter for a longer description, of which I should not have deprived the reader, if those which I pass

over in silence were of material consequence to those which I have reported. I shall therefore do no injury to this part of my subject, in passing to that of the Cabildos.

Cabildos.

A more correct idea of the cabildos, cannot be conveyed than in comparing them to the municipalites established by the constituent assembly. The sole difference is, that the cabildos have no mayor. They have *alcades in ordinary*, who correspond with our municipal officers; *regidors* who form the deliberative body, in the same manner as the notables form the council of the commune; a *syndic* who exercises the same functions that were exercised by the attornies of the commune in the municipalities; and a register charged with the digesting of the acts, and the care of the minutes.

Their Establishment in Spain.

This institution, purely municipal, was introduced in Spain about the same time that Louis Le Gros established communes in France, and from the same causes. In both kingdoms the kings beheld in the barons and counts, troublesome rivals, usurpers of those rights exclusively appertaining to the crown, oppressors of the people, who became blind and passive instruments of their attempts against the royal authority. The government, disgraced by the insolence of these powerful vassals, found the only means

of regaining its proper dignity, was to enfranchise their slaves, and to establish in the cities municipal tribunals, composed of their own inhabitants, to whom were committed the care of the police, and the cognizance of many judiciary matters, which they should exercise under the immediate authority of the crown. This revolution was effected without any commotion.

The barons ceased to be tyrants, for they had no longer any victims ; they ceased to command, for they were no longer obeyed. All the love, all the submission of the people turned towards the throne, which they considered as the fountain of benevolence ; and the royal power acquired that additional importance and stability, which it ought to have in every well regulated government.

Different circumstances, occurring in the history of France, contributed to weaken and restrain the authority of the municipal tribunals. They were nearly extinct before the revolution, except at Thoulouse ; while in Spain they exercised during those ages the plenitude of their primitive powers ; which they still preserve under the name of cabildos.

Origin of the Cabildos in America.

It was doubtless the high respect that the Spanish nation had for these municipal establishments, which persuaded the conquerors of America, that the government of these new possessions, ought necessarily to have the cabildos for its basis ; they also established them, as I have already observed, in all the vil-

lages which they founded. The consequence was that, having no other tribunal for a counterpoise, the cabildos, in the provinces dependent on Caraccas, extended their powers to a degree which had never been known in Spain. Every thing proceeded from them, excepting the military, and in a little time their authority no longer knew any limits.

Their excessive Power.

The weakness of governor Villacinda suffered the cabildos of Venezuela to take a gigantic stride towards the usurpation of sovereign power. This governor, who died in 1556, ordained, to the prejudice of his lieutenant-general, that during the vacancy the cabildos should govern the province, each in his district, until the arrival of a regular successor. Never perhaps did imagination conceive an idea so absurd ; but it was too flattering to those whom it clothed with authority, not to be considered by them as wise. Thus were the powers of government divided and distributed into the inexperienced hands of the cabildos. Each district of a cabildo became a republic, independent of the republic in its vicinity. This provisional government presented, during a year that it existed, a complete picture of chaos and confusion.

In the mean time, the cabildos, flattered with this unhoped for and injurious prerogative, sought to render it permanent, and convert it into a right. For this purpose, they deputed to the king an inhabitant of Truxillo, named Don Sancho Briseno, a man of insinuating manners and great capacity.

He was instructed to request :

1. That a freighted ship might come every year to Borburata, for the account of the inhabitants, on paying one half of the usual duties. This was granted, and continued in force for a long time.

2. The liberty of introducing, free of duties, two hundred negroes, for account also of the inhabitants. *Granted.*

3. That the convents of St. Francis and St. Dominic, of Hispaniola, might send monks to Terra Firma, to supply the want of priests. *Granted.*

4. That the king would decide, that in case of the death or absence of the governor-general, the command of the province should pass into the hands of the cabildos.

Every person, who has not lost the use of reason, will find this last request indiscreet, misplaced and ridiculous ; for, at the present day, our ideas on the exercise of power are more correct than those which prevailed at the time we are treating of. But then, the imperfection, or to speak more properly, the total want of system in the relations between the metropolis and the West-Indies, occasioned that these pretensions were found natural, reasonable and admissible.

The act of the 8th of December, 1560, relative to this subject, is expressed as follows :

“ We declare and ordain that, when our governor
“ of the province of Venezuela dies, before we have
“ appointed his successor, the alcades in ordinary of
“ towns and cities shall govern each in his district

“ until we have nominated another governor ; and by
 “ this act we give the alcades power to govern during
 “ the said time.”

Such a title, which conferred more credit on the negociator who obtained it, than on the understanding of those by whom it was granted, gave new *eclat* to the cabildos and opened a new field for their pretensions.

On the first vacancy of governor, which took place in 1675, by the death of Don Francisco Davila de Orejon, the audience of St. Domingo named, according to custom, a governor *pro tempore*. The choice fell on one of its members Don Juan de Padila Guardiola y Gusuran. He presented himself to the cabildo of Caraccas to be received. The alcades, Don Manuel de Felipe de Torbar, and Don Domingo Galindo y Payas, strongly opposed this nomination. They grounded their opposition on the act of 1560, which confided the government *pro tem.* to the alcades in ordinary of towns and cities, in their respective districts, until the titular, nominated by the king, had taken possession ; and that the audience of St. Domingo had no right to alter either the letter or sense of this positive order of the king, to which they owed obedience as well as all other classes of citizens. From thence arose debates, quarrels, recriminations and factions.

The cabildo continued to govern, and encouraged by the success of Briseno in Spain, dispatched immediately another deputy to the king, soliciting another act, not merely interpretive of that of 1560, but still more extensive ; demanding no less than the

exclusive right for the alcades in ordinary of Caraccas, of governing the whole province, in the interval between the death of a governor and the arrival of his successor. Don Juan de Arrecheroa had the courage to be the bearer of this presumptuous request to Spain; and the minister the weakness, still more astonishing, to receive him favourably. His majesty approved the conduct of the cabildo of Caraccas towards the oidor Padila; and, that the rights of the cabildo of Caraccas might be no longer equivocal, they were determined by an act of the 18th of September, 1676; which stated, “ That for the future, whatever cause
 “ may have vacated the office of governor of Vene-
 “ zuela, the alcades of the city of Caraccas shall gov-
 “ ern all the province, with the same rights and pre-
 “ rogatives as the titulars; nor shall the audience of
 “ St. Domingo, under any pretext or motive, name
 “ a governor *pro tem.*”

It is sufficient to know the qualities which are required in an alcade, and the duration of his office, which is but one year, in order to judge of the ill effects to which this measure gave rise. It is evident that powers so important and extensive as those of governor and captain-general, when ceded to men, who could not, except by uncommon chance, unite in opinion so as to act with wisdom, would contribute but little to insure external defence or internal tranquillity.

The history of the Spanish government in America abounds with faults of this nature. It was a long time before the ministry was convinced, that the same talents did not prevail in all ranks and professions.

They appointed indiscriminately to the office of governor, a member of the bar, a military man, a priest or a secular. How many Spanish bishops are there, as I have had occasion to observe, on the chronological list of governors in America, presiding over the audiences, and even commanding the armies? Have we not seen that the audiences are called, by the laws of the Indies, to supply the places of vice-roys and captains-general?

This error, however, of delegating to an individual, functions foreign to his station, is nearly exploded. It is rare, at present, that the government confides the command of the public forces to any other than military characters; that the priests are called to any but religious functions; or that the bishops are drawn from the discharge of episcopal to that of civil duties.

The vacancies of governors will in a little while be universally supplied, as they are at Caraccas, by men of the highest military grade. It is thus that all the works of man advance by slow degrees toward perfection, and experience gradually conducts us through errors and difficulties to truth.

Usurpation.

This triumph was particularly calculated to lead the cabildos into excesses, highly injurious to the exercise of the superior authority. The law, which placed in their hands the reins of government in case of vacancy, operated to awaken the desire of wrest-

ing those reins from the hands that held them. All their actions would naturally incline to this object. The annals of the province still contain divers facts which confirm this supposition. This may be determined by the following circumstance, which succeeded the act of the 18th of September, 1676.

In 1725, the alcades in ordinary, of Caraccas, deposed Don Diego Portales from the government, and threw him in prison, by order of the viceroy and the audience of Santa-Fe. The manuscript ecclesiastical history of the province of Venezuela, by father Tamaun, where this event is recorded, is silent as to the motives of this order, but it leaves room for suspicion that it was granted at the solicitation of the alcades.

Governor Portales immediately communicated what had happened to him to bishop Escalona, who was then making the circuit of his bishoprick, and could not return in less than two months to Caraccas. His intervention was so much the more necessary, since it appears that on a similar circumstance having previously occurred, the king had sent to this prelate an act, dated the 5th May 1721, by which he was enabled to release governor Portales from prison, if ever such an affair should be again repeated, and to reinstate him in the government, if he should have been removed. The obstacles to his liberation were trifling, but to his restoration to the government they were very formidable.

On the 14th May, 1726, the bishop summoned the cabildo to receive Don Diego Portales as the legitimate governor. The only reply to this summons was

a recourse to arms, which threatened in an alarming degree, the tranquillity of the city of Caraccas. The prudence, however, observed by the bishop in his proceedings, prevented the evils which this criminal resistance would naturally have occasioned. Perceiving that he could not publicly perform the formalities which the reinstating of the governor required, without an effusion of blood, which he would willingly avoid, he contented himself with discharging them in his episcopal palace. Don Diego Portales immediately retired into the interior, to obtain obedience from the other towns. As soon as the cabildo of Caraccas was informed of this, it dispatched eight hundred of the troops towards Valencia, to seize the governor and conduct him to the capital. Fortunately for him, he had taken another direction.

The most serious troubles agitated the province. The parties were near coming to blows, and that would have been the event, if the decree of the king, dated 18th July, 1725, rendered on the earliest advices given by Portales, had not been sufficiently clear and peremptory to awe the faction. As it left no room for subterfuge, the authority was remitted, by order of the king, into those hands from which it had been unjustly snatched by the ambition of the cabildo of Caraccas.

This is not all; the injury which these shocks of power gave to the sovereign authority, were the more reprehensible, as being subversive of all submission and dependence. To pass them over with impunity might have been productive of fatal consequences; to

prevent which the king was obliged to punish them ; but he punished lightly.

By an act of the 26th January, 1726, the conduct of the audience of Santa-Fe was censured, and its president and members condemned to a fine of 200 dollars, and to render up their process against Portales, to Escalona, the bishop of Caraccas. The alcades and regidores of Caraccas who had opposed, on the 14th May, 1725, the reinstating of governor Portales, were also condemned each to a fine of 1000 dollars, and to be sent to Spain by the bishop, with their process.

Restraint.

This instance of obstinacy from the cabildo of Caraccas, joined to many others which had preceded, demonstrated clearly the danger of its too great preponderance ; and how easily the immoderate desire of sovereign power made it forget what was due to the supreme authority and the public tranquillity. It is not then surprising, that the government which at first believed the cabildos equally useful in America as in Europe, should discover its error, and seek to remedy it by ceasing to increase their number, and by diminishing the influence of those that existed. Thenceforth the cabildos were placed under the eye and inspection of the military commandants, and almost dependent on the lieutenant-governors or civil officers, named by the governors with the title of *Justicia Mayor*. Perhaps these precautions were carried too far. The cabildos beheld themselves deprived of many prerogatives ; but that of Caraccas experienced

a more serious reduction in its power than any other, and at the same time made the least murmuring. Its members, little anxious to give greater latitude to a jurisdiction demanding such great care and assiduity, contented themselves with the precedence conferred by their stations, and discharged with lukewarm zeal the functions which were incontestibly a part of their duties. There is nothing more difficult for man, than to observe rigidly the line which separates his rights from his duties.

Their Composition.

The variations which time and circumstances have made in the jurisdiction of the cabildos, have had no effect upon their construction, which retains nearly its original form. Each cabildo has two alcades, who are called ordinaries, and who are appointed every year on the first of January, by a majority of the regidores. The regidores are permanent in office, and are proportioned to the importance of the city or cabildo.

The following is the constitution of that at Caracas.

1. The governor of the province, president of all the cabildos in his district.

2. Two alcades in ordinary, of whom the first elected is called *alcade de primer voto*: he bears *la vara* of justice, which the members of the audience carried formerly.

3. Twelve regidores, whose offices are venal. The incumbent may present this office to a subject, provided that the giver survives twenty-one days of the session.

4. Four other places of regidor, which the king confers gratuitously on citizens born in Spain, and settled in the town.

5. Four other officers who are denominated *de oficio*, with the qualities of *alferez real*, of provincial alcade, of *alguazil mayor*, and of *fiel executor*. These dernier employs are purchased. The first is attached to the household, *Palacios y Sojo*, at Caraccas.

All have a deliberative voice. This cabildo has also a syndic with consulting powers.

All the other cabildos of the provinces of Caraccas have fewer members, but none have less than two alcades and six regidors.

No village, parish or hamlet, is allowed the possession of cabildos. It is necessary that the place should be dignified, by the king, with the title of town, (*villa*) in order to obtain this popular tribunal. The city of Cindad has enjoyed them for a long time, and on account of its great population has more extensive privileges.

Elections.

I have before observed, that the election of alcades takes place every year on the first of January. The voters are the regidors. They alone have always exercised this right in America; for, at the time of the discovery of the new world, the people on whom this part of the sovereignty was originally conferred, exercised it no longer in Spain.

The elections of these magistrates of the people are protected against all constraint and violence.—

They should be made only in the town houses. The governors cannot form assemblies of cabildos in their houses, nor go to them attended by military officers.

The laws expressly forbid the viceroys, presidents and oidors, to oppose any obstacle to the free election of the alcades. Any exercise of authority, any intercession, any suggestion for the purpose of giving the suffrages a different direction from that pointed out by the consciences of the electors, is a punishable offence.

Time and prudence have, however, established that, as soon as they have proceeded to elect, they should furnish the governor with a list of the candidates, for his approbation. In places where there are no governors, this care is committed to the *justicia mayor*.

The requisite qualifications for a candidate are residence in the district of the cabildo, information, a knowledge of reading and writing, and such other qualities as are necessary in the Spanish empire, to render an individual worthy of distinguished employ.

All ecclesiastics, all military characters, except those who serve in the militia and are otherwise qualified, and all who are indebted to the king, are ineligible to the office of alcade.

It is recommended, by the law, to nominate in preference, when of equal merit, the descendants of those who first discovered, who tranquillized, or who peopled the West-Indies.

In case of the death or absence of an alcade in ordinary, the oldest regidor exercises his functions.

The cabildos hold their sittings on fixed days.—

They cannot convene any extraordinary assembly without informing the governor or his representative thereof, and imparting to him the subject of their intended deliberations.

The deliberations of the cabildos, the decrees of the king, the dispatches of the governors, should all be entered in registers appropriated to that purpose.

On every cabildo, however large the town, the number of alcades in ordinary, is limited to two.

Neither the alcades in ordinary, nor regidores can carry on trade or commerce, in any of the supplies necessary for the cities. This prohibition extends still farther in respect to the regidores; who are forbidden to engage in any kind of merchandise, either personally, or by agents, unless they have permission from the king.

Powers of the Cabildos.

According to the laws of the Indies, the alcades in ordinary, in places where there are neither governors nor lieutenant-governors, have cognisance of all such causes as would be cognisable by governors, or their lieutenants, in the places where they reside. They are carried, by appeal, before the audiences. To moderate the power of the cabildos, however, there are established, as shall be shown, in each place of their residence, a *justicia mayor*, who discharges the functions of a lieutenant-governor. Those who demand justice may address themselves indifferently, either to the alcades or *justicia mayor*. Their sentences have the same force, and are equally carried by ap-

peal before the audiences. The Indians have also their particular cabildos.—(See chap. iv.)

Lieutenants of Justice.

In such places as have no cabildos, the police and administration of justice are committed to the wisdom or the ignorance, the zeal or the indifference, the disinterestedness or the selfishness, in a word, to the good or evil conduct of a single man, whom the governor dignifies with the title of *Lieutenant of Justice*. His jurisdiction generally extends over three or four villages. No one but himself has a right to interfere, either directly or indirectly, in public affairs. His power is almost unlimited, as well as undivided. He is to account to nobody but the governor, for the measures he adopts to insure the public safety.

The nomination of lieutenants of justice is for two years, but they may be re-elected.

Their sentences in litigated affairs, go by appeal before the audiences, the ignorance of whom leaves them all possible latitude to give a cause any turn they think proper. It is rare that the packet presented to the tribunal of appeal, does not contain papers, justifying the sentence rendered.

I should have been mistaken in saying that these employments are neither desirable nor lucrative, as the contrary will soon be evinced. In fact, an employ of lieutenant of justice is regarded as an infallible means of making a rapid fortune. As soon as one is vacated, it is solicited with an eagerness proportioned to the advantages it promises; and it often happens

that patronage, family connexion, or importunity, extorts from the governor a nomination, unsanctioned by his conscience. Is it the nature of man, then, that he shall always abuse his power?

To shelter the royal authority from the injuries of the cabildos, almost all the new villages are deprived of this institution, and abandoned to the rapacity of a man on whom the law has placed no restraint. Happily, the reforms which successively take place in the different branches of the Spanish administration, leave room to hope that this abuse will soon be perceived and corrected. It appears to me that this object would be in a great measure effected, by associating with these lieutenants of justice, in the judgments which they render, two persons of their district, distinguished for probity and talents; and also, that they should not take any important measures of police without the advice, in writing, of two of the most respectable citizens, whose profession should be most analogous to the object of deliberation.

Imperfect as is this institution of lieutenant of justice, it would, however, be fulfilled, in every respect, according to the wish of the legislator, if they always nominated to the discharge of its functions, persons of equal understanding and integrity with him who filled this station at Victoria, fifteen leagues from Caraccas, when I passed there in 1801. Every body was loud in praise of his administration. His authority was obnoxious only to the unworthy. He enjoyed, at the same time, the esteem of his superiors, for he knew the respect due to sovereignty; and the love of those committed to his charge, for he sacri-

ficed every thing to their tranquillity and happiness. He returned to Spain in 1803. His name, which deserves to be known, is Don Michael de Adarraga. I believe he is a Biscayan. He was, at the same time, corregidor and lieutenant-governor.

At La Guira, at Porto Cabello, and even at Coro, the military commandants exercise also the functions of lieutenants of justice; another fault which cannot long escape the vigilance of the Spanish ministry.

Other Tribunals.

There are also other tribunals of justice, which will be treated of in the chapters relating to the matters under their cognisance. It is sufficient to observe here, that the Spanish colonists, divided into privileged classes, are far from being subjected to a common jurisdiction. The executive, the military superintendant, the administrator, have each their peculiar tribunal. As these three professions are each exercised by a great part of the white population, it is evident that there are but few distinguished whites, who are subject to ordinary tribunals. These privileges are called *fueros*. As an occasion will not again present to speak of the *military fuero*, the order of my history demands that I should here give an idea of it..

Military Fuero.

At first glance, what the Spaniards call *fuero*, appears natural and reasonable; for it permits the citizens of each profession to be judged by their com-

peers. The object of this institution was undoubtedly laudable ; but time, which alters all things, no longer allows its wisdom to be discernible. That the military *in procintu* should know no other police than that of their chiefs, nor other justice than that admitted by courts martial, appears to be incontestibly proper and well ordered ; but that this privilege should extend to the militia, when not in service, to military persons who have retired, to whoever has obtained from the king the slightest distinction, and to all causes both civil and criminal, is beyond all bounds of reason and propriety.

Even the exercise of this *fuero* is not the same to every one. The private, the corporal, and the serjeant are definitively condemned, in virtue solely of the sentence of the court martial, confirmed by the captain-general ; while the honour and the life of all those who are not in this inferior class, are under the immediate and direct safeguard of the king.

The former are judged in a simple council of war, and the judgment, if approved by the captain-general, is executed. His approbation, however, is not definitive. He must render the papers of the process to a member of the law, who, from the nature of his functions, has the title of *auditor*. If he finds the sentence conformable to the laws, he is to declare his approbation of it, without having the power to make any change or modification. The captain-general is obliged to conform to the advice of the auditor ; and his only alternative, in case he suspects fraud or deceit, or that the ordinance has been incorrectly interpreted, is to suspend the judgment, and render an account thereof to the king.

The condemned, also, may appeal from the confirmed sentence. On his appeal the captain-general is bound to give all the writings of the first condemnation, to a different member of the law from him who approbated the former sentence. He examines them anew, and gives his opinion under his own signature, which is submitted again to the captain-general for his approbation. This latter sentence, when approbated, is definitively executed.

The formalities are much more complicated for those who are neither privates, corporals nor sergeants. Voluminous writings, swelled by numerous declarations of witnesses, serve for the basis of a process, which is judged by a council of war, and immediately forwarded to the king, to be approved by the permanent council of war at Madrid, whose functions are to judge, in the dernier resort, all cases of the *military fuero*.

Complication of Judiciary Formalities.

The forms of the Spanish tribunals are generally complicated, slow, and, above all, expensive. There is no nation in the world, as I have already said in chap. iii. so addicted to litigation. All the citizens, as it respects the judiciary, may be divided into two classes; one which is ruined by chicanery, and the other which is enriched, or at least supported by it. Of judges, advocates, attornies, notaries, scriveners, alguazils and clerks, the number at Caraccas is six hundred, of whom four hundred at least are married: calculating from this account, there must be more

than two thousand persons who live on the misery and tears of the unfortunate client.

Facility of Exceptions.

Nothing is more easy than the occurrence of errors in the Spanish legislation ; nothing more common than inquests, than sworn declarations of witnesses, than exceptions to the judges. Without assigning any motive, every client may challenge three assessors of the governor. The ecclesiastical judges are privileged from challenge, unless founded on motives which are judged to be legally valid. The members of the audiences enjoy the same privilege, with this further particular, that if the motives for the challenge are not admitted, the party is condemned to 200 dollars fine, in case the president of the audience is challenged, and 120 dollars if an oidor. These fines are applied, half to the chamber, and half to the profit of the adverse party.

By the Spanish laws a judge is forbidden to preside in causes of his father, his children, his kindred, his family, persons of his household or who dwell with him, a female whom he is desirous to marry or to take in concubinage, and all the family of such female, his capital enemy, or him who he has maltreated, and their families.

Reflections on the Spanish Laws.

The Spanish laws, like those of every civilized nation, are admirable in theory, but subject to those

caprices which characterize every thing framed by the hand of man. Destined to restrain the passions, to prevent injustice, to protect virtue, they do not always accomplish their object, because the magistrate to whom they should serve as a curb, often applies them to a contrary use. This is neither the fault of the king, nor of the council of the Indies. Whenever truth has the good fortune to reach them, justice and innocence triumph, even in opposition to influence and wealth. But the truth rarely extends so far : those authorities instituted by the legislator, to keep watch upon each other, have so much reciprocal interest to promote, that the majority of the supreme decisions, given on false suggestions, bear with them the seal of the error on which they are founded. It is requisite to be very powerful and very rich to obtain in Spain, the punishment of an abuse of power committed in the Spanish Indies. He who does not unite these advantages, must patiently submit to injustice ; it would only be increased by his complainings, unless the affair can be represented to the council of the Indies. There reside penetration and impartiality.

The Spaniards have great consideration for the life of a man, and an absolute contempt for his liberty. The most atrocious crimes are required for his condemnation to death : the most trivial suspicion suffices to deprive him of his freedom. Every man who possesses the slightest degree of authority, has a right to imprison him who has none. The smallest debt, whatever may be its nature, plunges into prison the debtor who is unable to discharge it. It is true that,

if no property belonging to him can be discovered, and he makes oath that he has none, he obtains his release, after whole months of confinement. In every accusation, whether calumnious or not, they commence with imprisonment. No proof of crime is necessary for incarceration; but to obtain enlargement, innocence must furnish proof that the suspicion was unjust, and the grounds on which it originated false.

From this abusive facility of attacking personal liberty, results the slight impression made upon a Spaniard by the idea of a prison. He goes to it without emotion; he writes there from morning till night to the authorities, to his patrons, and to his friends; he receives visits from all his relatives and acquaintances with the same gaiety and the same countenance, as if this abode of sorrow and humiliation was his ordinary residence. He leaves it with the same serenity: returns punctually the visits he has received, and returns to society without ranking this event in the catalogue of his misfortunes.

Armed Force.

The defence of the provinces of Venezuela, Maracaibo, Varinas, Guiana, Cumana, and the island of Margareta, is confided to the captain-general, resident at Caraccas. The particular governors have a right to take such provisional measures as circumstances render necessary; but they must render an account of them to the captain-general, and are eventually to execute his orders. It appears, on the first

view, that the provinces acting upon the same plan must make a defence more systematical and more efficient, than if each acted separately. This would be the fact if they were sufficiently near to render mutual assistance. But the immense distance that separates them, prohibits the union of their common forces without much difficulty and great delay. It would perhaps be equally advantageous to let each governor follow freely the impulse of his honour and his talents, instead of obliging him to wait the orders of a captain-general, distant a hundred leagues from the nearest border of the province, or to apprehend his disapprobation, if the account he must render should not appear to sufficiently justify his provisional measures.

The first attacks of an enemy upon the provinces must naturally be by sea ; and, however feeble the hostile preparations may be, they must always be superior to those which protect the coasts : for the defence of which, Spain has appointed only a number of small shallops, intended to prevent the contraband trade, and which a single frigate would defeat. There is then nothing to hope by sea. We will see what resistance they can oppose by land, to attacks on the sea ports ; and will commence with Maracaibo.

Defence of the Sea Ports.

Maracaibo is bounded by what is at present properly called Venezuela, by the lake of the same name, and by deserts of sixty leagues in extent. These de-

serts intervene between Maracaibo and Truxillo, the nearest city from which it can hope for assistance ; to obtain which the assent of the captain-general is also necessary, whose residence is more than a hundred leagues distant.

This city, little calculated to excite envy by the deserts which surround it, must depend on its own forces to repulse any enemy that should resolve to incur the expense its possession would cost.

Three forts defend the entrance of the harbour. The garrison consists of four companies of regular troops. The militia form five companies of whites, and four of people of colour. The population of the city amounts to twenty-five thousand persons, many of whom would contribute valiantly to its defence.

Coro, sixteen leagues east of Maracaibo, is better protected by sterility of soil, and the poverty of its inhabitants, than it could be by the best troops. It is neither eligible as a place of conquest, nor as a point of debarkation.

The best defended harbour of the provinces under the captain-general of Caraccas is, without dispute, Porto-Cavello, fifty-five leagues to the east of Coro. A fort constructed with equal skill and solidity, situate on a small island to the north-west of the city, and provided with large and numerous artillery, constitutes its principal defence. Its fire crosses the fire of other forts situate to the west, on the east side of a large mountain. There is no permanent garrison at Porto-Cavello. The regiment of Caraccas furnishes it with one company, in time of peace, which is annually relieved. In time of war, the regular force is

doubled, and is reinforced by the militia of Valencia and Aragoa. In case of attack all the militia would repair thither, and in less than eight days, they might collect three thousand men.

More dependence could be placed on the courage and activity of the inhabitants of Porto-Cavello than upon the militia, whose collection is always tardy, and its valour equivocal. Porto-Cavello owed its deliverance, in 1643, to the Biscayans settled at that port; and, certainly, those who are there at present, do not yield in zeal and in courage to their predecessors. "An English squadron," says the ecclesiastic history of Venezuela, "attacked Porto-Cavello on "the 27th of April, 1743, but the artillery was so well "served by the Biscayans established in the city, that "the English were repulsed, and their vessels much "damaged."

On the 22d of October, 1739, the English were foiled in an attack on La Guira, situated twenty-five leagues to the east of Porto-Cavello. This port was not then as well fortified as at the present day. Destined to protect Caraccas, from which it is only five small leagues distant, it has received such great means of defence, as the bulwark of the capital demanded. Studded with forts and batteries, it seems to defy the rashest enemy. The continual roughness of its road, so inconvenient for commerce, would be of particular advantage to the Spaniards, in case of attack. Every thing announces that with valiant troops and expert artillerists, this place would not only prevent any debarkation, but might even destroy the strongest squadron.

Though an enemy should become master of La Guira, he would still have great obstacles to surmount before he could reach Caraccas: in particular if he attempted to proceed by the road at present used in the communication between the two cities. This road, expressly made to increase the difficulty of conquering Caraccas, crosses the summit of a mountain situated between the two cities. The whole of this space is defended, and on the height of the mountain are two forts which command the road.

The consulate of Caraccas has been desirous to construct another road, more commodious for the transportation of produce: it was even traced and commenced with such activity as to promise a speedy completion; but difficulties occurring between the engineer and the agent of the consulship, occasioned its suspension.

The military opinion pronounces that no other road can be employed, than that already in use, without compromising the safety of Caraccas; it is therefore presumable that the new road will remain a long time *en projet*. Experience however has shown, that this formidable road is not the only avenue from La Guira to Caraccas. About 1594, the pirate Drake, having debarked at La Guira, proceeded to Caraccas, with a handful of men, without experiencing any resistance: the forces dispatched by that city to dispute his passage, having proceeded by the ordinary road, in the persuasion, that he could only by that arrive at Caraccas. The pirate proved the contrary. He remained at Caraccas eight days, being as long as was necessary to pillage a city which had only thirty years of existence.

The city of Cumana, near a hundred leagues east of La Guira, is sufficiently difficult of access to an invading enemy. Situated a cannon shot from the sea, with its harbour half a league to leeward, it has nothing to fear but attacks under sail, which the distance would render ineffectual.

In case of debarkation, a fort, well maintained, situate on a hill in the eastern quarter of the city, would furnish much impediment. In addition to this, three companies of regular troops, who compose the garrison; the militia, consisting of eleven companies of whites, two of artillery, two of cavalry, eleven of people of colour, three of black infantry, a half company of artillery; with the inhabitants of the city and its environs, would oppose to the enemy a corps exceeding 5000 men, who would courageously defend their lives, their families and their property. The English made a fruitless attempt to seize it on the 1st of October, 1741: after four hours combat they abandoned their enterprise.

The island of Margareta, four leagues to the north of Cumana, is defended by nature, and one company of regular troops, four of white militia infantry, one of artillery, one of cavalry, and four infantry companies of people of colour. This island derives no attractions from its productions. The ungrateful soil admits no culture except of cotton, and that only in parts least cursed with sterility. But, it is perhaps desirable, as a military and commercial station.—
(*See article, isle of Margareta, in chap. X.*)

In ascending from Cumana to the east, and doubling Cape Paria to the south, no other port presents except Guiana. (*See chapter XI.*)

Debarkation on the Coasts.

All that has been said relates only to the defence of ports attacked by an enemy. But in the event of a landing on the coasts, it is sufficient to compare the extent of those coasts with the population of the provinces, to form an idea of the resistance an invading enemy would encounter. Reason, enlightened by experience, is very far from considering the forts of maritime cities essentially useful in the defence of a country. The preservation and the garrisoning of these fortresses cost immense sums in time of peace. They ought therefore, at least, to protect the country in time of war, from all insult on the part of an enemy. But the most they can effect, is to annoy and to restrain them, at a few toises distance from themselves. If a solemn convention should establish, on the part of nations, that no invasion should be attempted, but at fortified places, or if the coasts presented no other points of debarkation, we ought doubtless to keep all forts, batteries and redoubts in good condition, and well served. But upon a coast, where the ports are distant from each other sixty or a hundred leagues; where the intervals present numberless rivers, and beaches suitable for debarkation, all the heavy artillery of the sea-ports in whatever manner disposed, becomes not only useless but injurious; for it retains, as a guard, artillerists and other troops, who cannot remove, even in cases where a descent, on an isolated point of the coast may render their assistance indispensable.

By the revolution tactics has experienced, in the war which terminated the last century, the maxim

of leaving no strong posts in the rear, has disappeared with that of providing the means of a sure retreat, previous to offering or accepting battle ; and the success of the French arms has so well proved the correctness of this reform, that it has been adopted by the bravest and most experienced captains in Europe.

If this new method applies to a country like Europe, sprinkled with cities on which art has been exhausted to render them impregnable, with how much stronger reason should it be pursued in the invasion of possessions which have no fortified places but upon the shore, and those so distant from each other, that whole months are requisite for communication, even in the most favourable seasons ? To attack the sea-ports is to give preference to those points where the means of defence are assembled, and where the greatest obstacles necessarily present ; while in a debarkation at some distance there is nothing to be apprehended either from artillery, or from any considerable number of troops. The descent might also be protected by the vessels of the expedition, which, proceeding immediately to cruise before the ports, would attract and retain the troops, thus effecting a division of the force and consequently diminishing the resistance opposed to the invading army. Thus the enemy might penetrate into the country, every day augmenting its force with new conquests ; and by cutting off the communication between the interior, and the ports, already blockaded by the squadron, compel the latter to surrender at discretion, through famine, without the cost of a single cartridge.

This mode of conquest could not be effected, in either the French or English colonies, because :

1st. The cities are all on the borders of the sea.

2d. The country, cultivating only grain and the common necessities of life, is indebted to the cities for all those articles of sustenance, without which an European army can exist but with difficulty, and for a short time.

3. The white population, and all the troops inhabit these cities, which, situate around the island, may send forces from several points, and readily defeat an enemy who can find no supplies in the interior of the colony. On the contrary, in Terra-Firma, and in almost all the Spanish possessions, the principal cities are distant from the coast and without defence. The country furnishes all kinds of provisions, fruits and grain. Numerous droves of oxen, mules, horses, sheep, &c. assure to an army supplies of every kind. It is only necessary to have good maps, plans, and guides. It is therefore obvious, that the sea-ports of the Spaniards in America, are dependent on the country for subsistence, while in the Antilles, the reverse is the fact.

These reflections may be less accurate, and less serious than I believe them ; but my wishes for the prosperity of Spain, the faithful ally of my country, render me desirous that they should receive her attention. My labours will be amply compensated, if they serve as the basis for new plans, better adapted to the present state of tactics.

It is time to notice the organization of the armed force in the provinces of Caraccas.

Organization of the armed Force.

During more than 250 years, Spain has possessed the province of Venezuela and its dependencies, without sustaining its authority with troops of the line. The governors formed bodies of guards, on pay, for interior safety ; and, in time of war, reinforced them as circumstances required.

Troops of the Line.

It was only by royal regulation, dated the 6th July, 1768, that a regiment was established at Caraccas, on a military footing. It should consist, according to that regulation, of two battalions, in each eight companies, forming in the whole, 1363 men. Scarcity of cash, and difficulty of obtaining recruits, occasioned a reduction of this establishment at first to one battalion : four other companies have since been added. The regiment is therefore composed of twelve companies.

	Men.
1 Of grenadiers - - - - -	71
11 of fusileers, in each 77 men - - -	871
Total - - - - -	<hr/> 918

The service of this troop consists in the protection of Caraccas, La Guira and Porto-Cavello. Its recruits are procured from Spain, where the regiment keeps a recruiting officer. All are received who present themselves at these places.

Composition and pay of the Regiment of Caraccas.

The company of grenadiers is composed of

1 Captain, with the monthly pay of	-	\$68	}	878
1 Lieutenant	- - - -	44		
1 Sub-Lieutenant	- - - -	34		
1 First Sergeant	- - - -	17		
1 Second Sergeant	- - - -	15		
1 Drummer	- - - -	11		
3 First Corporals at 12 dollars each	- - -	36		
3 Second Corporals at 11 each	- - -	33		
62 Grenadiers at 10 each	- - -	620		

*Composition and Pay of each Company of
Fusiliers.*

1 Captain, having per month	-	-	\$60	}	853
1 Lieutenant	-	-	40		
1 Sub-Lieutenant	-	-	32		
1 First Serjeant	-	-	15		
2 Second Sergeants at 13 each	-	-	26		
2 Drummers at 10	-	-	20		
4 First Corporals at 11	-	-	44		
4 Second Corporals at 10	-	-	40		
64 Soldiers at 9	-	-	576	}	8540
10 other companies	-	-	-		

8540

Composition of the Etat Major, or Staff.

1 Colonel, receiving per month	-	-	\$218	}	517
1 Major	-	-	97		
1 Aid-Major	-	-	51		
2 Sub-Lieutenants, at 30 dollars each	-	-	60		
1 Surgeon	-	-	40		
1 Master Armourer	-	-	14		
1 First Fifer	-	-	12		
1 Second Fifer	-	-	10		
1 Drum-Major	-	-	15		

10,788

The colonel of this regiment is at the same time lieutenant of the king, and commandant of the place ; and all the other officers of the *etat major*, or staff, of the regiment, belong to the service of the place.

The reader will not forget that Maracaibo has, separately, four companies of troops of the line ; Cumana, three ; Guiana, three of 50 men each ; and Varinas, one of 77 men.

Artillery.

The artillery of these provinces is served, in the department of Caraccas, by one company of a hundred men ; two companies of white militia ; four of people of colour, and two of blacks, attached to the first.

At Cumana, one company of artillerists ; Guiana, the same ; and at Maracaibo, one company of militia artillerists, people of colour and blacks.

Militia.

It is a principle generally enforced by every metropolis in its colonies, that all the inhabitants must unite for their internal and external safety. Exposed, by the nature of their population, to disturbance more or less serious ; and, by their position and their riches, to incursions of the enemy, it would be ruinous for the colony, or for the metropolis, to keep on foot a sufficiency of troops to protect the national sovereignty, at all times and in all cases, without recourse to the colonists. But, that neither cultivation nor com-

merce may be too much interrupted, the service is distinguished into ordinary and extraordinary. The first is executed by the troops of the line, or regular forces, in garrison in the cities; the second requires the whole population to take arms, to dispel any danger that may manifest itself within, or threaten from without. Hence the necessity of forming militia, organized in each colony, according to the military system of its metropolis.

The whole attention of Spain having been long engrossed by Peru and Mexico, it has but recently given to the provinces dependent on Caraccas, a militia so organized as to command public consideration, and so disciplined as to promise the most advantageous results. This double object has been accomplished, beyond all expectation, merely by applying to this part of Terra-Firma, the regulations of February the 19th, 1765, and January 19th, 1769: the former made for the militia of Porto-Rico, the latter for that of the island of Cuba.

This organization, so nearly approaching to that of regular troops, has flattered the ambition of all the distinguished creoles to such a degree, that there is none of them who does not feel honoured by being incorporated in it, with the title of officer. An epaulette, on which ever shoulder it may be placed, is coveted by all persons of rank. The Spanish sub-lieutenant wears the epaulette on his left shoulder, the lieutenant on his right, and the captain on both.—The superior grades have no epaulettes: they are distinguished by gold lace on their sleeves. Two pieces of lace designate the lieutenant-colonel. The colonel has three. Opinion makes little difference between

the honour attached to the service in the army and the militia. The Marquis del Foro, one of the most wealthy *grandees* of Caraccas, prides himself in being colonel of a militia battalion in the valleys of Aragoa; and Count Saint Xavier, who neither yields to him in riches nor in birth, prizes no less the honour done him by the king, in 1803, in giving him command of a battalion of militia at Caraccas. It was the commencement of each in his military career.

At the slightest alarm of war, all the militia must hold themselves ready to march. They furnish detachments to reinforce the garrisons of the sea ports and of the capital.

They are constantly exercised in the management of arms. The captain-general reviews, at least once a year, those in the environs of his residence; and each particular governor should discharge the same duty in his district.

The people of colour form separate corps of militia and have officers of their own colour, as high as the grade of captain: all above that rank must be white.

At Caraccas, there is one battalion of white militia, consisting of nine companies, a squadron of whites, both created in 1771, and a battalion of people of colour.

At Valencia, one battalion of white militia, composed like that of Caraccas; and another in the valleys of Aragoa. Each of these places has also a battalion of people of colour.

I have already spoken of that of Maracaibo, and of other particular governments.

All free persons from the age of fifteen to forty-five

years, are subject to militia duty. Exemption extends only to ecclesiastics, judges, advocates, notaries, agents of cities, physicians, apothecaries, surgeons, attornies, administrators of the royal treasury, the syndic of the cordeliers, sacristans and servitors of the church, pensioners, grammar and school-masters, overseers of plantations, factors of tobacco, and authorised agents [*fondés de pouvoirs des cultivateurs*] of the planters in each district. But the sons, domestics, and clerks of those exempt are still liable.

Wholesale merchants, or factors of the provinces of Caraccas, are also exempt, as is likewise one clerk in each commercial house. The retail merchants have claimed the same favour ; but it was refused to them by cedula of 1801.

Students, who are not of the first orders, are not exempt from the militia, if they possess the age and other requisites. None, however, are forced from their studies to take the musket.

In time of war, the militia comprises all ages. This rule is probably observed in case of invasion ; I have never seen it enforced for the ordinary service of war.

When the militia is in campaign, or in garrison, the officers have the same pay with those of equal grade in the troops of the line. Each sergeant of infantry has four reals per day ; corporals have three each, and soldiers two. Sergeants, corporals, and privates of cavalry have the same pay with those of infantry ; the subsistence of the horses being at the charge of the king.

Cadets in the militia, as in the troops of the line, must be noble. Here we perceive the true talisman of the consideration attached to the militia.

Officers of mulatto and black battalions, have the following pay while in service :

The commandant of a battalion of mulattoes, has forty dollars per month ; each captain thirty ; lieutenants twenty-five ; and each sub-lieutenant or standard bearer, twenty.

The commandant of a battalion of free blacks, has thirty-eight dollars per month ; captains twenty-eight ; lieutenants twenty-two ; sub-lieutenants or standard bearers eighteen.

No person can wear a uniform, or cockade, unless entitled to that privilege by his employ, or military profession, under penalty of nine ducats.

Desertion to the enemy in time of war is punished with death. Absence without permission is punished with two years at the galleys.

Officers of the militia, who receive no pay, may marry without permission of the king, or of their chiefs : they must only apprise the latter of their intention.

An officer of militia, who marries a female whose birth is not suited to his own, is disbanded.

Sergeants, corporals, and soldiers of the militia who receive no pay, may marry without permission of their chiefs.

No military individual can be, against his will, neither in the cabildos, guardian, nor sequestrator.*

* Aucun militaire ne peut être, contre sa volonté, ni dans les cabildos, ni tuteur, ni sequestre.

*Exhibit of the armed Force of the Provinces under
the Captain-General of Caraccas.*

CARACCAS AND ITS ENVIRONS.

Caraccas.—*Troops of the Line.*

			Men.	
1	Company grenadiers	-	71	} 918
11	Do. fusileers, 77 each	-	847	

Artillery.

1	Company	-	100	} 900
3	Do. white militia	-	200	
4	Do. people of colour	-	400	
2	Do. blacks attached to the first	-	200	

Militia.

1	Battalion of whites, 9 companies	-	810	} 1630
1	Squadron, blacks and company	-	100	
1	Battalion, people of colour	-	720	

Valencia.—*Militia.*

1	Battalion, whites, 9 companies	-	810	} 1530
1	Do. people of colour	-	720	

Valleys of Aragoa.—*Militia.*

1	Battalion of whites	-	810	} 1530
1	Do. people of colour	-	720	

San-Carlos.—*Militia.*

1	Company of cavalry	-	50
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Cumana.—*Troops of the Line.*

3	Companies	-	221
			<hr/> 6779

Brought forward,	-	-	-	6779
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Artillery.

1 Company of artillerists	-	-	-	100	} 450
2 Ditto, white militia	-	-	-	200	
1 1-2 Ditto, people of colour	-	-	-	150	

Militia.

12 Companies, whites	-	-	-	1080	} 2245
2 Ditto, of cavalry do.	-	-	-	100	
11 Ditto, of people of colour	-	-	-	990	
1 1-2 Ditto, of cavalry	-	-	-	75	

Maracaibo.—Troops of the Line.

4 Companies	-	-	-	-	308
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Artillery.

1 Company, people of colour	-	-	-	100
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Militia.

5 Companies of whites	-	-	-	450	} 810
4 Ditto, of people of colour	-	-	-	360	

Guiana.—Troops of the Line.

3 Companies of 50 men	-	-	150
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Artillery.

1 Company of artillerists	-	-	-	100
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Militia.

4 Companies of whites	-	-	360	} 870
1 Ditto, cavalry	-	-	150	
4 Companies of infantry, people of colour	-	-	360	

 11812

Brought forward, - - - - - 11812

Isle of Margaretta.—*Troops of the Line.*

1 Company . - - - - 77

Artillery.

4 Companies of people of colour - - 400

Militia.

4 Companies of whites	-	-	360	} 770	
1 Ditto, cavalry	-	-	50		
4 Ditto, infantry, people of colour	-	-	360		
Total,	-	-	-		<hr/> 13059

Note. There has been an addition, since 1804, of one company of troops of the line, at Varinas, consisting of 77 men.

A
VOYAGE
TO THE
EASTERN PART OF TERRA FIRMA,
IN
SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER VI.

OF RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION.

Tribunals of Inquisition—Their privileges—First grants of the popes—Limits of their powers—Royal patronage—Exercise of this right—Bishopricks—Annuities—Oath of the bishops—Ecclesiastic tribunals—Their privileges—Chapters—Curates—Eulogium of the French curates—Classification of the curates—Curate rectorors—Curates doctrinal—Missions—Missions of Piritu—Of Cumana—Of Venezuela—Other missions—Merit of the first missionaries—Cooling of the original zeal—Actual missionaries—Appointment of missionaries—Riches of the catalan capuchins of Guiana—Eulogium of the missionary Fabara—Secular priests—Convents—Pious donations—Prebends—Monks—Temples—Asylums—Their origin—Inconstancy of their legislature—Abolished in France—Abolished in England—Maintained in Spain—Reduction of the asylums—Legislation of the asylums—The asylums injurious to the law—They shackle the operations of the law—They promote assassination—They must soon be abolished.

THE catholic, apostolic, and roman religion, is not only predominant, but exclusive, in all the Spanish possessions, as in the metropolis. The schismatic, or the person who is even suspected of being such, passes a very uncomfortable time there.

Tribunals of the Inquisition.

Three tribunals of the inquisition, or holy office, which have their sessions at Mexico, Lima, and Carthagena of the Indies, are inexorable defenders of the faith in all Spanish America.

Their Privileges.

In their primitive institution, their cognizance was confined to matters strictly of heresy. *Inquisitores non possunt se intermittere in aliis, causis quam in delictis contra fidem. Clem. de hæres. cap. mult. prim. parag. propter.* The law soon assigned to them cases of divorce, polygamy and sodomy, which it has since successively referred to other tribunals.

The abuse that a priest can make of confession, by rendering it subservient to his passions, comes under the cognizance of the inquisitors. As in this case it is necessary to proceed against the priest on a denunciation not supported by proofs, the least appearance of rancour, hatred, or vengeance, occasions its rejection. Nothing is admitted except merely the denunciation, accompanied with the circumstances which render the crime probable.

These tribunals can condemn to fine, confiscation, banishment, the galleys or the flames. The secular judges, even the audiences, must respect their sentences, and cause them to be executed. The principal functions of these inquisitorial tribunals consist in anathematizing all books the contents of which wound the tenets of religion, offend modesty, or tend to deprive government of its consideration, and the laws of that respect which is their due.

Such is the vigilance of the inquisition that this regulation concerning the police of books, is more rigorously executed both in Europe and America, than any other regulation appertaining to the Spanish regime.

From whatever part books may come, in whatever language they may be written, neither the entrance, circulation, nor use, are permitted, until they have been judged orthodox by the commissaries of the holy office.

Every bookseller in the Spanish dominions, is bound to furnish, in the two first months of every year, an inventory of the books he exposes for sale : to this must be subscribed his oath that he has no others than those contained in the inventory.

He is forbidden to purchase or sell any book prohibited by the inquisition, under penalty, for the first offence, of interdiction from all commerce in books for two years, banishment, during the same term, to twelve leagues distance from the place in which he was established, and a fine of two hundred ducats to the profit of the inquisition. Repetitions of the offence are proportionally punished. The book forming the substance of the crime, may have been already sold, and in the hands of a third person, but the declaration of the purchaser suffices to subject the bookseller to all the penalties specified.

Every bookseller must have in his store a catalogue of the books censured by the inquisition, under penalty of forty ducats. It is even necessary, that the catalogue should be his own ; for if it is borrowed, he is equally liable to the fine, as if he has none.

No bookseller may proceed to the inventory, estimate, purchase, or sale of private libraries, without furnishing to the commissary of the inquisition, a statement, containing the names and surnames of the authors, the titles of the books, the subject matter,

and the place and year of the impression, under penalty of fifty ducats.

Every person who enters the country with books, must make a declaration detailed and sworn to, which is sent to the tribunal of the inquisition or its commissaries, who have the power to permit their introduction or to seize them. The omission, or imperfect execution of this declaration, occasions a confiscation of the books, and a cost of 200 ducats for the expenses of the holy-office.

When books, as most frequently happens, are deposited at the custom-house, with other effects, or merchandise, the officers of the customs cannot release the books, but by express permission of the commissary of the inquisition : which he does not grant till he has previously examined them.

Catalogues, which Spaniards may receive from abroad for the selection of books, must, before any use is made of them, be sent to the holy-office, which may retain or restore them.

Whoever may have the temerity to elude the vigilance of the inquisition, is not therefore in peaceable possession of the proscribed books he has received. He remains exposed to those domiciliary visits, which the commissioners of the inquisition have a right to make at any hour either of day or night.

The tribunal of the holy inquisition, can grant particular permissions to read prohibited books. This is frequently done to persons whose manners are unequivocally national, and whose principles are steadfast and unalterable. The priests and monks most readily obtain these permissions ; but they do not extend to

all the books prohibited. Some are so strictly forbidden that neither the inquisition nor the pope permit them to be read, except in cases extremely rare.

Formerly it sufficed for a book to contain a single proposition of questionable orthodoxy, a single equivocal maxim, to provoke its entire prohibition. At present it is thought sufficient to suppress the vicious or suspected part. This operation is called *expurgar*, (purifier.) In this case, they obliterate the offensive passages of the book, and with those exceptions, permit it to be reprinted or read.

But when the basis of its principle appears impious, scandalous, or obscene, the whole work is condemned; and according to the importance of its injurious tendencies, it remains interdicted, even to those who have the privilege of reading prohibited books. Thus the books on whom the holy inquisition has exercised its authority, may be divided into three classes, viz. *corrected* books, which become national; *forbidden* books, which may be read on permission; and *proscribed* books, which cannot be read without a special permission.

The French works condemned to an absolute proscription are: *The New Abelard; Academy of the Ladies; the Year Two Thousand Four Hundred and Forty; Philosophy of Good Sense; Discourse of the Emperor Julian against the Christians; Political Maxims of Paul III. Bayle's Dictionary; Portable Theology of the Abbe Bernier*;^{*} *the Continuation of Bossuet's Universal History; Theory of Criminal Laws*, by Brissot de Warville; *Religious Ceremonies and Cus-*

^{*} The Baron de Holback, under the name of Abbe Bernier.

toms; the six last volumes of a Course of Study, by Condillac; Dialogues drawn from Monialisme, or the Principle of Nunneries; Treatise on Virtues and Recompences; Instructive Errors; Journal of the Reign of Henry IV. King of France; Military Philosophy; Genius of Montesquieu; Literary History of the Troubadours; Philosophical and Political History, by the Abbe Raynal; Belisarius, by Marmontel; Memoirs and Adventures of a Man of Quality; Nature, by Robinet; Researches concerning the Americans; System of Nature; Social System; Voltaire's Works; Rousseau's Works; Essay on Universal History, by Jean de Antimoine; History of Prince Basile; History and Life of Arétin; Monuments of the Private Lives of the Twelve Cæsars, &c. &c.

That the prohibition of books may be public and notorious, the tribunal of the inquisition directs at intervals, a catalogue to be printed of those, the reading of which is forbidden, under penalty of fine and censure. In the three first centuries of its establishment, the inquisition contented itself with declaring heterodox, a strange work found in the hands of the citizens, and at the same time punished the offence, which ignorance had occasioned. On the 30th of June, 1640, the inquisitor-general, Antoine de Sotomayor, published a mandate, announcing to the faithful such books as were proscribed by the inquisition. Their number was very reduced. It consisted only of the works of Æcolampadiu, Luther, Erasmus, Pelican, Zuinglius, Munster, Castalius, &c. condemned as much for their works, as for the alterations made of the holy scriptures.

In 1707 and 1747, the inquisitors general ordained more strongly the execution of the mandate of 1640, and added new dispositions to the preceding.

But, properly speaking, it was not till in 1789, that this department of inquisitorial duties, received the order and perfection of which it was susceptible. The inquisitor-general, Don Augustin Rubin De Ceballos, ordained, the 26th of December, 1789, the impression of a new catalogue more exact than the preceding and with the distinction of books corrected, forbidden, and proscribed. At the head of the catalogue are the rules, which never before existed or were published, according to which the works are to be judged by the inquisition.

Agreeably to these rules, every book which contains only a few scattered and accidental propositions of heresy, is allowed on a retrenchment of the tainted parts.

But every work, written by a heretic, or which treats, in common language, of matters in controversy between the catholics and modern heretics, is entirely prohibited.

Whatever may be the subject of a book, if it does not announce the author, the printer, the date and place of its impression, it is, by that single circumstance, prohibited.

Every work that treats only of love, of magic, of witchcraft, or of superstition, is deservedly condemned.

The Talmud and all the books of the Rabbins and Hebrews, and the confutations of the alcoran are comprised in the absolute prohibition.

Nothing evinces more clearly the zeal of the inquisition, than the number of works it has condemned within two centuries. The catalogue of prohibited books, printed in 1790, contains the names and surnames of five thousand four hundred and twenty authors, reprobated by the tribunal; not to mention the infinity of anonymous productions which have experienced the same fate.

Spain is so attentive to preserve her religious and political principles, in all their purity, that she repulses from her bosom whatever may conduce to their injury. To this effect the inquisition has set the seal of its reprobation, not only on the works of Servet, Bayle, Voltaire, Rousseau, Raynal and all those who have written in defence of the doctrines of Mahomet, Luther, Calvin, &c. but also on the productions of the Abbe Racine, Masson, Morvillers, Fleuron, Addison, Arnaud, the Marquis d'Argenson, Beccaria, Marmontel for his *Belisarius*, Abbe Bernier, Baron De Bielfield, Count De Bonneval, Bosinet, Nicolas Boileau, Despreaux, Tycho-Brahe, La Fontaine, La Bruyere, Burlamaqui, Ganganelli, Condillac, Montesquieu, *Robinson Crusoe*, Desormaux, Lacombe, Prezel, La Croix de Compeigne, Diderot, Helvetius, Fontenelle, Dufrene, Francheville for the *age of Louis XIV.* Hubner, Hume, Count D'Oxenstien, Puffendorf, Robert for his *Universal Geography*, Vattel, Filangieri, Millot, Abbe De Mably, Dupaty for his *Letters on Italy*, Fenelon, &c. &c.

Commissaries.

The inquisition nominates, in all the cities within the district of the tribunal, commissaries without jurisdiction. They furnish information on every affair denounced to them, and send the process and the accused, to the tribunal.

Appointments.

The appointments or salaries of the members of the inquisition, are paid from the fines and confiscations imposed by that tribunal, and from the proceeds of a place of canon, which is left vacant in each cathedral for that purpose. When all these are not sufficient, the royal coffers furnish the deficiency.

Popes.

Notwithstanding the purity of religious worship in the Spanish colonies; notwithstanding the fervor of the faithful, and the empire of true belief, the pope has no direct influence there. They believe, however, in his infallibility, in his sanctity, in the virtue of his indulgences, in the validity of his dispensations &c. but things have been so disposed, that the pontifical authority cannot penetrate there, excepting through the prism of royal authority.

First Concessions of the Popes.

Alexander VI. by his bulls of 1493 and 1501, transmitted to Ferdinand and Isabella the direct and

useful domain of America. It is in virtue of these bulls, supported by force, that the kings of Spain have conquered, and preserved all their possessions in the West-Indies.

These bulls derived all their importance from the opinion of the age ; which regarded the court of Rome as the secretaryship of the divinity. Extraordinary as they appear to us at the present day, particularly the former, they were equally of service to the Spanish kings in establishing their sovereignty in the new world ; in repulsing from their transatlantic possessions, the jurisdictions which the popes might have wished to exercise there ; and in furnishing a motive for obtaining other bulls more positive and extensive : leaving the pope no power to do any thing in America but what was sanctioned by royal approbation.

Limits of the powers of the Popes.

The holy see can communicate directly with the Spanish Indies, only in reserved cases. These relations are rare, since the bishops enjoy a more extensive right of absolution here, than in Europe. All other pontifical acts, as briefs, bulls, dispensations, indulgences, &c. must be sent from Rome to the king of Spain, who has committed their examination, exclusively to the council of the Indies. This council determines whether or not, their execution would be productive of evil, and directs or forbids it, according as it appears advantageous, injurious, or indifferent to the system of the colonies.

Spanish policy has thus reduced the pontifical authority, for the purpose of increasing that of the king; which has become in the Spanish Indies, the centre of power and the source of every favour, of every employ either civil or ecclesiastic. The consequence is, that whatever profession a Spaniard embraces, his hopes are all dependent on the king. From the lowest officer to the viceroy, from the door-keeper to the chiefs of justice, from the meanest scrivener of the administration to the intendant, from the porter of a cathedral to a bishop, all are nominated by the king. In the distribution of this infinity of employs, of dignities and honours, consists the grand bulwark of the royal power in America.

Royal Patronage.

The right of patronage appertains exclusively to the king. It has been conferred on him by bulls of the popes, particularly that of Julius II. in 1508; and what more completely invests him with this right is, that the discovery of the new world, the propagation of the faith, the founding of cities and villages, the erecting and supporting of churches, are works solely of the crown, or more correctly speaking, are established at the expense of the royal treasury.

According to this permanent right, no cathedral nor parish church, no monastary nor hospital can be founded in America, without express and direct permission from the king.

Exercise of this Right.

The archbishops, bishops and abbés are nominated by the pope, but on the particular and spontaneous presentation of the king. Truth requires that I should make honourable testimony to the wisdom and justice which presides at those appointments. In Spain, the priest, whether born in obscurity, or of illustrious descent, the monk and the secular, are equally eligible to religious promotion. Superior talents or information joined to an exemplary deportment, are generally the qualifications which entitle to preference. It is true, however, that favouritism has often an influence in these nominations. I agree that the saint, ambitious of no honours, will experience little trouble in avoiding those of the episcopacy; yet it is equally certain, that solicitations are ever fruitless, when the candidate has no other merit than that of patronage. We find no Spanish bishop who is not a good theologian, who does not lead an exemplary life, who does not reside constantly in his bishopric, who does not share his revenue with the poor of his diocese, in a word, who is not a true patriarch in the bosom of his numerous family.

The canonries in the Spanish possessions, are given only to persons chosen by the king, who is extremely attentive in bestowing these elections solely on merit. In fact, as these places require more assiduity than motion, as they lead more to a sedentary than an active life, they are almost always the recompence of aged curates, who have discharged with zeal, the laborious ministry of their parishes. I have

never seen one of this venerable class, who drew from his revenue, more than was indispensably necessary, and who did not divide the surplus among his relations and the indigent.

No person in the Spanish possessions, can possess, at the same time, two benefices, two dignities, or two prebends. The bishops are charged to render to the king, an account of the vacant benefices in their dioceses, of the rents attached thereto, and of the individuals most worthy of obtaining them. The candidates must address themselves to the viceroys or governors, and present to them their petitions, accompanied with all their recommendatory vouchers, even the opinion of the prelate. The viceroys or governors forward them all to the minister, and from the examination of these documents, results the nomination or refusal.

The nomination of curates is, also, in the Spanish Indies, a royal right, exercised on the spot by representatives of the king. They hold an assembly which lasts for a month. The bishop proposes three persons, whom he judges most worthy, and from this list the governors select.

Deference to the bishops, has introduced the custom of always nominating the candidate whose name is first on the list. This, which at first was merely a habit, in the lapse of time became regarded as a law. In 1770, the governor-general of Caraccas would have departed from this order. He nominated to the curacy the third on the presented list. But the contrary usage had taken too strong root, to be overturned so easily. Bishop Marti complained loudly

thereof to the king, who rendered an edict confirming the nomination made by the governor ; but ordaining that henceforth, the governors should nominate as curate, the first candidate on the list, presented by the bishop, unless he had strong reasons to the contrary ; in which case he should confer with the bishop, and arrange with him the nomination. Creole priests are preferred to Europeans, for the curacies ; and those who understand the Indian languages for doctrinal curacies (*doctrinaires*). No priest who is not born in Spain or Spanish America, can possess any benefice, unless he obtains letters of naturalization from the prince.

All difficulties which arise on exercising the royal patronage, are carried, of course, before the council of the Indies, which regulates all matters of religion ; so that no other right remains to the pope, but that of granting the bulls which they request, and deciding on cases of conscience which they submit to him.

It is superfluous to prolong this article, relative to the royal patronage. The remainder of its rights will naturally be discussed in the examination of the ecclesiastical organization.

Bishops.

There are three bishoprics in the jurisdiction of the captaincy-general of Caraccas. The first, originally established at Coro, was transferred, in 1636, to Caraccas. The particulars of this transfer, are found in the description of the city of Caraccas. The second, established in 1777, at

Merida de Maracaibo, has, for diocese, the dismemberments which have been made from the western parts of the bishopric of Caraccas, and the northern part of the archbishopric of Santa Fé, which for civil government depends on the viceroy of the new kingdom of Grenada. The third is at St. Thomas de Guiana, formed in 1790, of the immense province of Guiana, the province of Cumana, and the island of Margaretta. The island of Trinidad, ceded to the English by the treaty of Amiens, made also a part of this bishopric, which is a dismemberment of that of Porto Rico.

The bishopric of Merida is suffragan of Santa Fé. Those of Caraccas and Guiana have not had a metropolitan since the seat of the archbishopric of St. Domingo ceased to exist, by the cession of that part of the isle of France, until, in 1803, when the cathedral of Caraccas was constituted metropolitan, having for suffragans the bishoprics of Merida and Guiana, as is remarked under the article of *Caraccas*, chap. X.

The revenues of the bishops arise from tithes. The king, to whom they appertain, deducts two ninths from the moiety, and abandons the rest to the ministers of the gospel. The bishop has a fourth part of the whole. In some years, this quota has yielded the bishop of Caraccas seventy thousand dollars. This revenue, however, being subjected to the vicissitudes of agriculture, and the price of necessities, has been reduced, during the present war, to less than forty thousand dollars; and many years of peace are evidently necessary, to render it equally lucrative as before the war. The bishop of Merida's

revenue is about one fourth of that of the bishop of Caraccas. In the bishopric of Guiana, the king has always gathered the tithes, and paid, from his coffers, the salary of the bishop, fixed at four thousand dollars. From circumstances, however, it is probable the latter will soon participate in the tithes ; when his revenue will amount to ten or twelve thousand dollars.

Annuities.

The bishops render to the king, in his character of patron of the Indies, their first year's revenue. Formerly they paid only a twelfth part, under the name of *annats*, or first fruits. But they were eventually taxed, like all the other benefices, to pay one year entire, under the name of *annuidad*, annuity. The only mitigation they have been able to obtain, is, that of paying it in six annual instalments.

Oath of the Bishops.

The first obligation of an elected bishop, is to make oath before a notary, that he will respect in all points, the royal patronage ; that he will oppose no obstacle to the full exercise of the rights which it gives, or to the collecting of the products dependent thereon. Whatever orders the titular may bring, he cannot be put in possession of the bishopric, unless he presents a certificate of this oath.

The laws of Spain, less accommodating on this article, than those of France, forbid that any bishop

should enjoy the revenues of his bishopric, unless he resides personally in his diocese.

Ecclesiastical Tribunals.

Each bishop has his proper tribunal, which is called *ecclesiastical*. It is composed of the bishop himself, the fiscal proctor and the provisor.

All ordinary sentences are rendered by the provisor; the bishop only judges in causes of importance, or that interest ecclesiastical personages, such as canons.

Appeals from these sentences are rendered to the archbishop. If the appellant succeeds, the party condemned may appeal to the nearest bishop, and the judgment of this third tribunal receives definitive execution. If the appellant is condemned at the metropolitan tribunal, he cannot appeal anew.

Their Privileges.

The constitution of these tribunals is similar to that of our ancient officialities, (*bishops courts*) though they have more privileges than the latter, which, since the ordinance of 1539 have scarcely any cognizance, except in actions on promise or dissolution of marriage. It must be granted at the same time, that the Spanish ecclesiastical tribunals have likewise suffered great reductions in their jurisdictions. There even exists, between these and the civil tribunals, a contest in which the former have rarely the advantage.

The jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical tribunals embraces all causes of a spiritual nature, and all matters connected with them—such as orders, benefices, patronages, tithes, marriages, legitimations and funerals. The secular tribunals, according to Acevedo, have cognizance under the royal patronage, although the question should be between ecclesiastics, or against them.

Although the ecclesiastical tribunals have cognizance, even against the laity, on questions whether tithes are due, yet the secular tribunals are competent to decide in disputes concerning their payment, or their recovery ; because these species of causes are called *mixti fori*. I speak here only of tithes appertaining to the churches: when they appertain to the laity, the secular tribunals decide both on the right and on the fact.

The portions of nuns, donations to churches or any other sacred places, and to other pious uses are in the province of the ecclesiastical tribunals. But the demands of churches, monasteries or priests, for rents, *juros*, alms, gages, rights and other favours or privileges of the king, and also which are not by way of deed or vassallage, should be carried before the secular tribunals, as much for the right as for the fact.

The ecclesiastical tribunals, have also cognizance of pious legacies made to churches by contracts between the living, or by last will ; either for the repose of the soul, the redemption of captives, or other objects of a similar nature. They have also the right of executing testaments in all their parts, in cases

where the executor does not fulfil the will of the testator within a year, or sooner if in his power, even though the testator should have signified a contrary will. When these causes are between the laity, the secular tribunals have also jurisdiction over them, because they are *mixti fori*.

The jurisdiction of civil and temporal causes, between priests, as well as those wherein a layman pleads against a priest, belongs to the ecclesiastical tribunals. But if the priest is demandant, the cause is carried before the secular tribunal.

The priest administering on effects not belonging to the king or his council, is prosecuted before his proper tribunal.

A guardianship given by a lay-minor to a priest, should be discussed before the secular tribunal; and that of a minor priest given to a layman, should be brought before an ecclesiastical tribunal, to which should also be rendered an account of the guardianship.

Finally, the ecclesiastical tribunals, rank among their prerogatives, the defence and preservation of the immunities of the churches, known by the name of *asylums*; of which I shall treat, before I conclude this chapter.

The process of the ecclesiastical court, is subject to the same forms as that of the secular. Their judgments are said to be less slow and expensive. That however does not prevent them from multiplying writings, from perplexing the clearest affairs, from consuming abundance of stamped paper, and from fleecing the unfortunate clients. By what fatality

does it happen, that all human affairs are thus subject to abuse? The question conveys its own answer—they are human.

Chapters.

The chief place of each bishopric, has a chapter, of which the number of members is always proportioned to the revenues of the diocese. That of Caraccas, being the richest, possesses also the most numerous chapter. During one hundred and four years that the seat of the bishopric was at Coro, it had no other canons than a dean and a chapter. In proportion as the tithes were augmented their number increased, so that at present the chapter of Caraccas counts for its members, a dean, a sub-dean, a chapter, a preceptoral prebendary, a treasurer, a magisterial prebendary, a doctoral, a penitentiary, a prebendary of favour, and six prebendaries, of whom three are demi-proportionaries.

The chapter of Merida, less numerous than that of Caraccas, would nevertheless, have been still less so, had it followed the same rule of proportioning its number to its revenue. Its rents do not exceed the fourth of those of the chapter of Caraccas, yet it is composed of a dean, one doctoral, one magisterial, two prebendaries of favour, and two other prebends.

The bishopric of Guiana, has a chapter of only two canons, to each of whom the king pays annually, from his coffers, six hundred dollars. If the revenues of the bishop come to be assigned on tithes, this new chapter will doubtless receive also its part. and

like those of Caraccas and Merida, will acquire new members, in proportion as it acquires new rents to support them.

Curates.

After the bishops and chapters, naturally follows this class of pastors, so useful when their deportment and vigilance respond to the august object of their functions; and so injurious, when they abuse the consideration, the respect and the confidence, which their sacerdotal character inspires. God forbid that I should refuse to the generality of Spanish curates, all the virtues of their station, or withhold from them those eulogiums, merited by the indefatigable zeal with which, day and night, they administer their spiritual succours. They all appeared to me, possessing in an eminent degree, every pastoral quality. I acknowledge that I know very little of the particulars of their administration; but, however perfect it may be, it cannot excel that of our French curates. The religious reader, will not perhaps be displeased, if I here give a sketch of them.

Eulogium of the French Curates.

The French curates have always taken for the basis of their actions, that the sheep are not made for the pastor, but the pastor for the sheep. From thence, is naturally derived the obligation to watch over their preservation and sacrifice every thing to their happiness.

Convinced that example is more eloquent than the most studied precepts, they commence by regulating their own lives, according to the model which they propose to their parishioners. Far from coldly confining their cares to spiritual things, they on the contrary extend them to every department of civil life, where their influence may prove useful. They become, at the same time, the pontiffs, the fathers, the protectors and the administrators of their parishes.—The laws receive equal succour from them, with religion, since, in being priests, they do not forget that they are citizens. Forbidden all coercive means, they have, like the saviour of the world, no other arms than persuasion, no other authority than gentleness. They study, above all, to conciliate the practice of the christian with the social virtues.—They rank labour among the highest duties imposed on man by his creator. The slothful, the idler and the vagrant, are equally reprehensible in their eyes, with those who directly violate the duties of religion. Instead of multiplying religious ceremonies, and allowing superstition to take root, which converts the best of christians into an insupportable fanatic, they confine themselves to enforcing those religious fetes, which are strictly enjoined. Every one employs all other days, all other moments, in procuring the comforts of life, in fulfilling his task in society, and in contributing to the public prosperity. No person is entitled to the alms of the pastor but the infirm, the aged, and the orphan. This is but an inconsiderable part of the good which has always been, and still is performed by the respectable French curates, for the

happiness of their parishioners. The peace, tranquillity and concord of families, are also the serious objects of their cares. Domestic quarrels are, by their mediation, appeased as soon as known. The hatred which interest or passion often produces between citizens, yields to the indefatigable cares of these pastors, and is terminated by sincere reconciliations: chicanery finds in them the most inveterate enemies. How often have they drawn citizens into a happy understanding, when they were about commencing, or perhaps had already commenced, a process, the delays and expenses of which, would probably have produced the ruin and misery of all parties! There is a certain emulation among the curates, on this point, which causes them to consider as a good deed, every process which they have prevented or destroyed. Such men are doubtless worthy of public veneration; and in effect they enjoy it so fully, that they are more frequently regarded as tutelar angels, than as public functionaries.

Classification of the Curates.

The care of souls is confided, in the Spanish Indies, to rectoral curates, doctrinal curates and missionaries. The first are those who officiate in parishes, where the Spanish population predominates. The second, those who exercise curial functions in the Indian villages. The third, those who catechise the Indians, and instruct them in the rudiments of the social life.

The functions of rectoral and doctrinal curates are nearly the same. The latter are merely enjoined to much more assiduity in the instruction of the Indians. In this consists the difference of their recompences and emoluments.

Rectoral Curates.

The rectoral curates have a right to the amount of the tithes which remains, after deducting one fourth for the bishop, another fourth for the chapter, and two ninths which appertain to the king. The part which accrued to the lower clergy, was divided among the curates of the towns. The curates successively established in other places, were excluded from a participation. They complained thereof; and, as might be expected, supported their complaints with peremptory motives. The king decided, that the part of the tithes destined to this use, should be sequestrated, until the pretensions of the new curates were adjusted. Ten years have elapsed since this order was executed, and the rectoral curates reduced to their perquisites; which, in fact, are more considerable in the Spanish colonies, than in any other part of the christian world.

Doctrinal Curates.

The doctrinal curates have much fewer perquisites, because they are forbidden to take any thing for the marriages, baptisms and interments of Indians. The king allowed them, as a compensation, the annual

sum of 183 dollars, according to the laws of the Indies; but, by a subsequent law, a new settlement is made, proportioned to the importance of the village. Besides the first fruits, they collect tithes on grain and vegetables. To this order of curates the missionaries transfer such Indians as have already received the principles of civilization.

Missions.

The idea of making the conquest of America a species of crusade, was greatly owing to the right which Spain had received from the court of Rome, of uniting the new world to its dominions, for the purpose of establishing christianity therein. The bull of concession of 1493, was founded on this motive. Every invasion was believed legitimate, when the cross was borne beside the royal standard. "Be-
"come a christian or die," said they to the Indian,
"and thou canst not be one, without despoiling thy-
"self of thy liberty and effects, in favour of those
"who procure thee this blessing." This moral, or rather, this abuse of "the right of the strongest," produced the greatest violences; until at length the Spanish kings, informed of the outrages perpetrated in their name, and without their knowledge, wisely determined to confine the conversion of the Indians to more suitable persons. To them who had courage sufficient to scatter the seeds of faith on a soil, which perhaps might be sprinkled with their blood; who had sufficient contempt for the riches of this world, to content themselves with the recompence promised

in another ; to such as propagate or die for the faith ; who had sufficient talents and patience, to draw the Indian from the habitudes of a savage life, to make him prefer a residence in villages, to a residence in woods, and the duties of society, to the rights of independence ; who had sufficient vigour to brave the inclemency of the seasons, and the insalubrity of ailment. All these virtues, all these qualities have shone beyond belief, in the missionaries employed by the Spanish in the new world. This measure was put in practice at St. Domingo, nearly at the moment that the Spaniards arrived there ; but we must not judge of its goodness, from the effects it produced at that place. The total extermination of the Indians in that island seemed to be the wish of the apostle, as well as of the conqueror. In other parts, subjugated by the Spaniards, the missionaries were not introduced until after the government, wishing to avoid a further effusion of blood, renounced the use of arms in aggrandizing the Spanish sovereignty. I have already said and demonstrated, that all the principal cities at present existing within the district of the captain-general of Caraccas, were founded and peopled by force of arms alone. With the exception of two weak and unfortunate missions to Cumana, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, which were immediately exterminated, the milder measures of christian morality were not exclusively employed, until towards the middle of the seventeenth century.

Mission of Piritu.

The *projet* of establishing missions in Terra-Firma, was conceived by Francis Rodrigue Leyta, an inhabitant of St. Cristoval des Cumanagotas in the province of Cumana.

He communicated the plan in 1648 to Don Lopez de Aro, bishop of Porto Rico, who found it worthy of being proposed to the king of Spain. The death of this prelate was a great detriment to the celerity of its success. The bishop, however, who succeeded him, declared in favor of the project, and made such representations as determined the king to suspend, by cedula of 1652, all military expeditions against the Indians of the province of Cumana. At the same time, by command of the king, an envoy was dispatched, consisting of eight missionaries, of the order of St. Francis, at the head of whom was father Jean de Mendoza, equally commendable for his deportment, as for his talents.

These missionaries landed at Cumana, the 8th of May, 1656. They chose as the scene of their apostolic labors, that part called *Piritu*, which is on the coast beside the rivers Unaca and Barcelona. The reduction of the Indians who occupied this territory was the more difficult, from having been attempted for a long time; and the more important, since it would open between the province of Venezuela and that of Barcelona, a communication which these Indians rendered impracticable. This enterprise cost the missionaries but a few months of privation and

fatigue. Before the expiration of a year, they founded the village of la Concepcion de Piritu. Their success was every day more evident. By dint of trouble and perseverance, they inspired the savages with a relish for the sweets of social life, and inscribed on the grand list of subjects of the king of Spain, men who had until then been the most cruel enemies of his authority.

After having removed from this part of the coast, all the dangers to which the Spaniards were exposed, the ever fervent zeal of these apostles, induced them to penetrate farther into the interior, than any mission had ever proceeded. Gaining ground foot by foot, they have passed the Oronoko, leaving behind them none but men converted to social life, and they have reached the Rio-Negro (Black River) where they labour at the present day. The tract which they occupy is more than five hundred leagues.—This mission, like all others, has consumed an infinity of missionaries, who successively came, and still come from Spain.

Mission of Cumana.

Nearly at the same epoch that the mission of Franciscans was established at Piritu, another arrived from Spain, destined for the province of Cumana, composed of Arragonian capuchins, who had already passed two years at Piritu, (1651—1652) from whence they had been recalled to Spain on complaints made by the council of the Indies. These

complaints being proved unfounded, and their innocence established, they were sent back to their functions, and the province of Cumana assigned to them. Their ministry was the more useful here, since conquest had made but little progress in these parts, and the Spaniards possessed scarcely any other territory, than the mere environs of the city of Cumana. By the cares of these missionaries, several villages were founded. All the plain ceded gradually to their morals. The mountains, less accessible, opposed obstacles to their progress, which are not yet surmounted. It is always the province, or rather, kingdom of Arragon which furnishes this mission with the requisite members.

Mission of Venezuela.

The example and success of the two missions, just mentioned, animated several capuchins with a holy zeal, who repaired to the province of Venezuela, to preach there the gospel, under the direction of father Caravantes. They formed missions to Caraccas, Valencia, Barquisimeto, Nirgua, Tocuyo, Carora, Truxillo, Tocuyo on the coast, Maracaibo, La Guira, La Victoria, San Matheo, Cagua, Tulmero, Quibon and Quara. They flocked there from all parts. Many Indians even, attracted by the singularity of the sight, abandoned their savage life, to participate in the advantages of christianity.

The chapter of Caraccas, which then governed the vacant bishopric, judged by the advantages re-

sulting from these pious exercises, of those which would be produced by missions in constant activity; they therefore requested from the king a supply of missionaries, for the conversion of those multitudes of Indians, who in that province had defied all military effort, and maintained their own independence. This request was granted, by cedula of 21st May, 1658. Six capuchins of the province of Arragon were sent to Caraccas. The effects of their zeal surpassed the most flattering expectations. The whole province had been covered with savage and ferocious Indians, who prevented all communication between the principal cities, unless by a circuitous route, or an armed force. The fruitless efforts employed to reduce them, had only augmented their love for the savage life, and their hatred to the Spaniards. The resignation of these new missionaries, their morality, and their exemplary lives, soon effected that desirable object, which government, with all its expedients had been unable to accomplish during a century and a half. Several, as well of the first missionaries, as those who succeeded them, fell victims to their barbarous proselytes; but they had only their blood to shed, and, in devoting themselves to this enterprise, they had made an offering of it to God and the king.

To these venerable men must be ascribed the conversion and even the civilization of the Goamos, Atatures, Cucaros, Guarivos, Chiricoas, Goara-noas, Otomacos, Amaibos, Zaruros, Chirigas, Atapaimas, Dazaros, Cherrechennes, Zaparipas, Go-aigoas, Guires, Gayones, Achaguas, Guayquiris,

Mapoyes, Tamanacos and Atysasamas, of which nations, each had a particular language, or a different dialect. To this mission also, several cities and villages owe their foundation : as Saint-Francois-Xavier, La Divina-Pastora, Saint-Francois, Saint-Joseph, San-Carlos, Araure, San-Jean-Baptiste-del-Pao, Mayquetie, &c. In a word, it has the merit of completing the civilization of the whole Venezuela province, to the banks of the Oronoko, whither it was impossible to penetrate till this mission had opened the road. Thus the total reduction of the province terminated with rendering the mission unnecessary ; and in fact it no longer exists. Those villages which are still in the hands of missionaries, have for their pastors, capuchins from Andalusia.

Other Missions.

In several places in which the same evils existed, a similar remedy has been employed, but not in all cases with equal efficacy.

A mission of capuchins from Navarre exists among the environs of San Faustino and the city of Perija, in the province of Maracaibo ; but it effected much more at first than it does at the present day.

In the environs of Varinas, toward Santa-Fe, there is a particular mission of Jacobins dependent on Santa-Fe.

On the banks of the river Apure, there is a mission of Andalusian capuchins : they have also in charge a few villages of Indians who have not yet

been brought under the civil authority, in the province of Venezuela.

Guiana, during two centuries, excited no solicitude on the part of government. It was regarded as a possession of too little promise to be worth rescuing from the savages and the waters. It was only in 1724 that Philip V. ordered the province of Catalonia to send thither a mission of thirty capuchins : they arrived in the year following. The labours of this mission produced the formation of more than forty villages, and the conversion of all the Indians who occupy that part of Guiana which is between the Oronoko and Cape Nassau, and between the sea and the river Caroni. Its attentions have been equally exerted in the upper country of the Oronoko, and several villages attest their efficacy ; but the reduction is less complete than in the lower regions.

Such are the missions which exist in the country I have undertaken to describe. The great number of works which I have found it necessary to peruse, that I might obtain the history and be enabled to present a summary of it to the reader, have given me an idea of the missionary too honourable to humanity to be kept from the public.

Merit of the first Missionaries.

When imagination conceives all that the greatest devotion, the purest zeal, and the most meritorious resignation can deserve, it will form but a feeble outline of those claims which the conduct of the mis-

sionaries in America present to the admiration and the applause of all just men. It is important to premise that neither obligation nor obedience influenced them to this enterprise. No person of the religious orders, is ever compelled in Spain, to enter upon an American mission. It was therefore of their own free will, and through a pure desire to propagate the faith, that these men abandoned their country, their climate, their repose, and their attachments, to transport themselves into a region where all the elements conspire against the European. But what are these dangers, which so many brave, in comparison to the particular hazards which encompass the missionaries? No sooner were they cast upon these distant shores, than they plunged into the forests, without any other force than the firmness of their own souls, without any nourishment but the fruits of an uncultivated soil, without any guarantee but providence, without any hope of escaping the ferocity of the natives but that which might spring from the influence of morality: even this too was rendered more feeble, since it could be of no avail, until they had acquired the language of the nations they came to teach.

How many of these worthy apostles have been torn in pieces by the savage Indians to whose mercy they had submitted their lives! How many have become the prey of ferocious beasts, have perished with hunger, or have fallen victims to those maladies, which excessive heat, heavy rains, and the deadly effluvia of marshes combined to render fatal. How often has it been requisite to renew these missions—to replace their sacrificed members!

When we behold men devoting themselves to imminent hazard of death, the occurrence may be explained by an extraordinary zeal, and by the glory which results from braving such danger ; but when experience has proved that the sufferings to be encountered are beyond human ability to sustain, that the nations among whom they must reside are composed of cannibals ;—to find still new martyrs, new victims presenting themselves for sacrifice, is a phenomenon that must ever redound to the honour of the christian faith.

The men who thus readily sacrificed themselves to the propagation of the faith, must have been well convinced that an abode of happiness, and of delights, is the eternal recompence of the just ! They must have been fully satisfied of the nothingness of this world, who thus exchanged the pleasures of retirement for a life of agony prolonged. Well did they earn the palm of martyrdom—the only incitement to a vocation which occasions us to shudder while we admire. Virtuous anchorites ! to whom society is indebted for so many men who, but for you, would still dispute the prey with the ferocious beasts—to whom religion owes so many proselytes, who would still have been plunged in the gloom of pagan darkness—receive my homage : it is pure, as your labours were painful and meritorious.

Cooling of the primitive zeal.

But why is not this eulogium equally applicable to those who occupy the same missions at the present

day ? It is because nothing in nature is constant—nothing survives the lapse of ages without alteration. Opinions, like actions, are subject to the same versatility. Things which seem wonderful at one time, cease to appear so at another.

Even those principles which rest on the immutable laws of nature, are not sheltered from this fluctuation of the human mind. Every nation bends them to its own ideas, and the pressure of years renders them undistinguishable.

Contempt, sooner or later, succeeds to admiration, and enthusiasm gives place to indifference. These new sentiments, worn out in their turn, are replaced in process of time, by those whose station they occupy. Thus it is, that the holy fervour of the missionary has become chilled, and no longer exists but on the lips. The religious orders of Spain still furnish individuals, who offer their voluntary services to replace those missionaries who die in America. It is doubtless their intention, on leaving Spain, to devote themselves to the spiritual conquest of the Indians, without anticipating any reward for their labours except the crown of the martyr or the recompense of the apostle. But on their arrival in America, finding the lives of their brethren rather fashioned according to the spirit of man than the spirit of God, the frailty of their natures deems it more convenient to follow than to furnish an example. He must be brave who prefers a death of glory to a life of indolence ; yet if courage were a general quality it would cease to be a virtue :—at least it would become so common that being found in the cloisters, it would of

course be found every where. Enthusiasm resembles courage in its efforts ; but as it is an extraordinary movement of the soul, the same impulse can only excite it for a time :—With regard to the provinces of Caraccas, that time *has been* nearly a century.

Actual Missionaries.

The missionaries are at present distributed among the reduced villages, where they exercise curial and apostolic functions. There is but one in each village. He enjoys all the veneration due to a priest, and the homage rendered to a sovereign. The population in these villages consits exclusively of Indians, nor is any other admitted. This measure, prescribed by the law, is greatly advantageous to the authority of the missionary ; and such is his vigilance to prevent a mixture, fatal to his power, that Spaniards who may have occasion to pass these villages are only allowed to remain the time requisite for refreshment if they arrive during the day, or to pass the night if they come in the evening. The missionary receives them at his own dwelling, and prevents all communication with the Indians ; nor are they permitted to prolong their stay on any pretext. These precautions render it impossible to ascertain particulars concerning the manner of their lives. But their assiduity to conceal the details of their administration, the actual nullity of reduction and conversion among the savages, the tardy civilization of those Indians who for successive generations have been confided to their ministry—these furnish grounds for the opi-

nion that neither the cause of religion, nor national sovereignty derive any material advantage from their labours.

It is against my will, and only in obedience to those laws by which every historian is obligated, that I suffer those melancholy truths to flow from my pen. My heart submits with pain to the necessity of relating others still more afflicting: for deficiency of zeal and luke warmness of conduct are not the only reproaches merited by modern missionaries.

They are forbidden to exact any compensation from the Indians, either for administration of the sacraments, or for any other ecclesiastic function. The prohibition is not directly violated, but its spirit is completely eluded by the sale, at a thousand per cent profit, of rosaries, scapularies, and little images of the virgin and of the saints. The poor Indian is perpetually menaced with the wrath of God, till he has purchased some of all the different kinds for sale by the missionary. This imposition, apparently so trivial, is repeated sufficiently often in the course of a year, to become an object of importance and of speculation.

The law has in vain guaranteed the Indian from all obligation to employ his labours gratuitously, for any person's profit. The avidity of certain missionaries does not blush to abuse their religious influence; to employ alternately menaces and promises; and thus to obtain from the timid and credulous Indian, labour beyond his strength, without allowing him any share of its proceeds.

It is no rare occurrence to see deputations of Indians arrive at Caraccas, to complain before the bishop and captain-general against the oppression of the missionaries ; to request their recal, or at least the suppression of their abuses. It is equally customary to see missionaries sent for by the royal audience of Caraccas, to answer charges, in which they are accused of great excesses. There are also some missionaries, who openly deal in commerce, or rather in counterband and monopoly ; and who in defiance of their rules accumulate wealth. Report, which is not always confined within the limits of truth, ascribes to many of them capitals of sixty and eighty thousand dollars. The amount is perhaps exaggerated, but if one half is deducted, it is impossible to deny the other.

The mission of Franciscans merit an honourable exception from these charges ; and I make it with particular satisfaction.

Appointments and compensation of the Missionaries.

The mercantile spirit of the missionaries finds some justification in the smallness of their allowance. This was more than sufficient for the first missionaries, who subsisted on roots and wild fruits ; but is inadequate for domestic support and for a decent maintenance. I have already remarked that all their functions must be gratuitous ; they of course derive no income from perquisites. Their compensation from the king must of course supply all their necessities. I will give the reader, who is acquainted with

America, an opportunity to judge whether the appointments of the missionaries are sufficiently considerable, to dispense with further accessions.

Each missionary of the province of Piritu or Barcelona, receives 150 dollars per annum in that province, and in the lower country of the Oronoko: in the upper parts of Oronoko and Rio-Negro, or Black River, they have 200 dollars.

The Arragonese capuchins, who serve the mission of Cumana, on the side of Paria and the bottom of the Oronoko, have each 111 dollars.

The mission of Andalusian capuchins, on the banks of the river Apure, in the province of Varinas, and who occupy also some villages of the province of Caraccas, receives annually for each of its members, 50 dollars.

The capuchins of Navarre, who are stationed in the province of Maracaibo, on the borders of the river San-Faustino have each 150 dollars.

The Catalan capuchins who occupy the lower parts of Guiana receive, or should receive, 150 dollars each. I say should receive, because that since 1791 the payment has been stopped, on pretence that they are possessed of sufficient property to defray every charge.

Riches of the Catalan capuchins of Guiana.

It is true that the capuchins of Guiana possess, in common, immense droves of horned cattle. The manner in which they have acquired them, is so ho-

nourable to their foresight that it deserves to be related.

The first Catalan capuchins arrived at Guiana in 1725, and had to struggle with all the necessities of life, in a country where man had till that time demanded nothing from the earth, but what he obtained without culture and without labour: They were on the point of imitating the jesuits, their predecessors, whom misery and famine had compelled to abandon that mission; but the regret and the shame of thus losing the object of their journey directed them to an expedient which they soon rejoiced at having adopted. Two of their number were sent, in 1726, into the province of Barcelona, to procure, through the aid of charity, some cows for the commencement of a herd, which should be the common property of the mission. The two envoys accomplished this hazardous and fatiguing journey, with a promptitude and a good fortune that is regarded as a prodigy. They obtained from the charity of Pierre Figuera, an inhabitant of that dependency, twenty-eight cows and two bulls, which they conducted successfully to Guiana. The attention bestowed on their natural increase was so efficacious that their present number exceeds a hundred and fifty thousand: all of which belong to the missionaries of Guiana. The missionaries themselves inspect the administration of the droves, which cover the surface of Guiana, and the produce is employed to satisfy their wants. This has not prevented their applying to the king, for the payment of their ap-

pointments ; and a royal cedula of 1800 ordered, in fact, that they should be paid with the arrearages. But the intendant and audience evade the execution, and subject the demand of the missionaries to such tests that it is evident the result will dispossess them of their cattle if it gives the appointments ; or will give them nothing if it leaves them in possession of their herds.

Eulogium of the missionary Fabara.

Nothing would remain to be related, concerning the missionaries distributed over the district of the captain-general of Caraccas, had I not reserved for the termination of this article the pleasure of making known the brilliant virtues of one distinguished missionary :—the worthy Fabara, who neither yields in fervency of zeal nor in resignation of mind, to those fathers who first devoted themselves to the conversion of the Indians. This venerable man belongs to the mission of Arragonese capuchins who were sent into the province of Cumana. Impressed with the duties of his station, he disdained the pleasures attached to the calm and lucrative functions of governing a village of Indians already civilized ; and preferred the more painful task of founding new villages, among Indians perfectly savage. By his mildness, affability, and morality, he has succeeded in collecting together, thousands of Indians, who had constantly repelled all former missionaries.

The Indians who occupy the Bergantin mountains,

and the Guaraunos, at the mouth of the Oronoko, constitute the nursery from which father Fabara draws the population of an immense village formed by him on the banks of the Guarapicke. This village retains the name of *Bon-Pasteur*, (good pastor) given to it by the public voice. The virtue of Fabara is so well known to the Indians, that they believe him to be of a different species from the other missionaries. He is in fact neither sovereign, nor even magistrate over his converts, but is satisfied with the appellation of father, the title of friend.—He has the address to inspire the Indians with a love of labour, without their perceiving that they are influenced by the suggestions of the good father Fabara. The products appertain entirely to themselves ; so that the aspect of misery, which gives a melancholy air to all other Indian villages, is replaced in that of *Bon-Pasteur*, by an appearance of prosperity which rejoices the soul. There are no poor among them, except him who governs them. In short, all other missionaries confine themselves to the preservation of those Indian villages which they have found already established ; father Fabara alone founds new villages. His brethren avail themselves of the labours of their predecessors ; Fabara labours for those who shall succeed him, for religion, for the Spanish sovereignty, for society.

Venerable and respectable man, I leave you with regret : the limits of my work deny me the pleasure of detailing all those traits which form your character. Envy will perhaps discover that I have already said too much ; but her suggestions are to me of no im-

portance. May your days be multiplied in proportion to the usefulness with which they are employed !

After the class of ecclesiastics who discharge curial functions, historic order naturally presents that of priests who exercise only sacerdotal functions. This class is composed of seculars and regulars.

Secular Priests.

It is well known, that Spanish America, like the metropolis, abounds in priests ; but it is not equally known that they are less numerous than formerly, in proportion to the population. The ecclesiastic state seems to smooth so easily the road to heaven, and obtains so much consideration and so many benefits, that it could not fail to be eagerly embraced by men, whose character, piety and ambition, desired no better than to become, at small expense, wealthy and respectable in this world, and eternally happy in the other. Hence, in the first ages of the discovery, the vocation of the white inhabitants seemed to be entirely for the priesthood.

We perceive, by a request presented to the king in 1644, from the city of Mexico, how much the ecclesiastic ministry engrossed of the population and riches of society. The inhabitants of this principal city in America, solicited the interposition of royal authority to prohibit the founding of new convents ; to set limits to the revenues of those already established ; and to restrict the powers of the bishops to confer orders—because they already reckoned above six thousand ecclesiastics without benefices.

In the other parts of America, the number of priests was proportionally great. The church was the centre of all wishes, of all affections. It is true that the man who rejected the benefits offered by the soil, because they could not be obtained without labour, found in those days no other mode of life suited to his inclinations, but the indolence of a convent. But in proportion as fixed regiments, established in all the principal places of the government, and an organized militia with military uniforms and privileges, have offered to the Spaniards of the colonies emolument and honors, the seminaries of religion have become sensibly depopulated. At present they seek an epaulette with as much avidity, as they did formerly the tonsure.

The multitude of prosecutions, having produced a multiplication of tribunals, which employ an inconceivable number of persons, has contributed much to diminish the number of priests. The complicated system of finance, by requiring the creation of numerous lucrative employs, toward which the Spaniards direct their wishes, has also drawn many individuals from the ecclesiastic state. It is not therefore to agriculture that the church can ascribe the loss of her ministers. Notwithstanding this diminution of ordinations, every parish has, at least, its curate; no station in the chapters remains vacant; each prebend has its titular; and there is still, in every city, an overplus of priests who lie in wait for vacant benefices; independent of others, without ambition, who lead retired lives on the produce of their patrimony, and the income of their masses.

America, discovered at that precise period when Spain considered her prosperity dependent on the multitude of religious foundations, partook, necessarily, the effects of that opinion, and was speedily covered with churches and convents. Hence the monasteries of the province of Caraccas invariably date the epocha of their establishment at nearly the same time with those of the cities in which they are placed.

The city of Caraccas had been founded only thirty years, and was in size but a village, when it possessed a Franciscan and a Dominican convent. It is in fact customary to graduate the importance of a city by the number of its convents, nor is this singular thermometer without considerable accuracy. Some persons believe that that they discharge their duty to society, in thus separating themselves from it ; others think that true happiness exists only in the seclusions of a cloister ;—nor is it astonishing that persons who make happiness to consist in repose, should find it within those solitudes. Devotion favours greatly this *penchant* for retreat. The women soon imitate the example of the men, renouncing the sacred duties of wife and mother, and inclosing themselves for life within the walls of these retirements, where the liberality of the pious must provide for their subsistence.

Pious Donations.

When a person had been denied this happiness of banishing himself into a convent, he repaired this failure of homage to the divinity, by leaving his

property to the monasteries. Money, houses, lands, every thing was applied to this pious work, without which, the road to heaven would be found covered with obstructions. A testament that contained no legacy in favour of the convents, passed for an act of irreligion, which left more than a doubt concerning the safety of his soul by whom it had been committed. These gulphs of population, soon swallowed up riches also : while they deprived the earth of cultivators, they took likewise from those who destined their labours to its culture, the means of rendering it fruitful.

Prebends.

The mania of prebends, was presently added to that of donation to convents. Whoever possessed property, and did not, when dying, appropriate a part to the prebends, left his memory tainted. Nothing more could be necessary for their multiplication.—Where is the inheritance, in the provinces of Caraccas, that is not incumbered with one or with several prebends? These acts, it is true, have become much more rare, and much less important. People are almost convinced that they may venture to appear before God without having ruined their relatives, to found prebends or to enrich convents ; they begin to believe that we will be judged rather by our virtues than our prodigalities ; but what is given is given ;—the convents and churches must, therefore, possess the purest and most unembarrassed riches of Terra-Firma.

It would be wrong to accuse the government of not remedying these evils, since they have neither escaped its vigilance nor its penetration. Since 1622 every notary has been forbidden to pass any act or instrument, in which a sick person, on the bed of death, shall give the whole or part of his property to his confessor, secular or regular, either for himself, or in title of *fidei-commis*, or to be employed in pious uses, &c. The preamble of this law proves that government had perfect knowledge of the abuses and injuries resulting from these donations, both to the legitimate heir, and to public prosperity. It was contented with pointing them out, and yet sanctioned every disposition of property that was reported.—How is this to be accounted for? Public opinion, too servile to reach the elevation of this reform, paralyzed the law, which at first had but very little, and subsequently no effect. It was not till 1771 that the execution of it was again called for and obtained in Spain: nor was it published in Caraccas but in virtue of a royal order, dated 22d December, 1800, and then not till the 6th of February, 1802.

Monks.

The causes to which I have ascribed the diminished number of secular priests, have produced a similar reduction in the order of Monks. There is not a convent in the provinces of Caraccas, that contains half the number it had fifty years back. Notwithstanding the augmented population and riches of the country, more than sixty years have elapsed, since

the foundation of a convent. This does not result from a deficiency of suitable situations. There are many places, distinguished by their increase during the last century, which in former days would have been crowded with convents ; but opinion, the regulator of human actions, has changed : the inhabitants are devout enough to preserve, and even to venerate, the convents already established, without being sufficiently so to augment their number.

Churches.

The temples of religion in these provinces are of very solid construction, and in a taste tolerably modern ; but the riches they contain is much less than is generally imagined. My observations in the chapter which describes the city of Caraccas, are applicable to all the churches of Terra-Firma. They are decent and even elegant without being magnificent.

I have now reached, as I think, a suitable place and moment, to fulfil my promise, of giving some details concerning the immunities of these churches and their effects. I request the reader to attribute the digressions of my pen to that indignation which an observer of sensibility experiences, who sees institutions of so absurd a nature resisting the progress of intelligence.

Asylums.

The Spanish government, less from the slowness of its operations than from a respect for ancient insti-

tutions ; less from the timidity than the cautious prudence of its reforms, retains, in the legislation of the empire, as in the usages of its inhabitants, the spirit of those abusive charters which originated in former ages. Centuries have elapsed since they have been banished by other nations to the obsolete archives of antiquity.

Their Origin.

The asylums to which our ancestors had recourse to correct the imperfection of their laws ; of which the pagans availed themselves, to render their deities more venerable ; and which the first christian emperors, having established their privileges, transmitted to the churches ;—these asylums must be considered as fetters on the operation of the laws, and as highly prejudicial to the public safety. Yet, through the whole extent of the Spanish empire, they are still as much respected by the magistrate, and as obstinately defended by the ecclesiastic tribunals, as they could have been in the sixteenth century.—This institution bears the semblance of piety, and the church places it in the rank of its most precious rights.

Van Espen informs us that, during the three first ages of the church, the priests, impressed with the sanctity of their station, did not dream of arrogating the right of giving laws to these asylums. That humility which was the basis of all their actions, and to which the advancement of christianity is so much indebted, influenced them here. They claimed no

other means of serving the cause of humanity than, through recourse to the piety of princes, to obtain by solicitation, in the name of a merciful God, the pardon of those who had flown for refuge to the churches: but they soon obtained, by concession or usurpation, the entire legislation of the asylums.

Inconstancy of their Legislation.

A multitude of bulls, all bearing the stamp of the age, or of the character and views of the pontiff who issued them, threw the legislation into extreme confusion: a confusion the more injurious, as it engrafted among the articles of religion the impurity of criminals who, while their hands were yet reeking with the blood of those they had murdered, fled to the sanctuary of the divinity to escape the vengeance of the law. The churches dedicated to the worship of a just God, were thus converted into places destined to brave the operations of justice.

The popes imagined that they increased the respectability of the church and its ministers, by elevating its temples above the laws, and rendering them inaccessible to the magistrate: as if justice and the laws did not emanate from divine precept. These considerations, irreconcilable with public safety, and still more incompatible with our ideas of divine justice, embarrassed many consciences: particularly among those who confounded the light of faith with the blindness of credulity. Reason revolted from the belief that God would protect in this world, the same crimes to which he had attached eternal punish-

ment in the future. But in those days of human infatuation, it was found more convenient to believe than to reason.

Asylums abolished in France.

This influence of the pontific will over the civil law, was not, however, conceded by all christian nations. In the eighth century Charlemagne, struck with the abuses resulting from the asylums, rendered them in some degree nugatory, though respect for existing prejudices prevented their formal abolition. He ordered that murderers and other criminals, deserving of death in the eyes of the law, and who fled to the sanctuary of the church, should not receive from it either absolution or sustenance, “*ut homicidæ et ceteri rei qui legibus mori debent, si ad ecclesiam confugerint, non excusentur neque eis ibidem victus detur.*” (Cap 1, anni 779, art. 8.) He ordered also that thieves should be delivered up from their privileged places, to be brought before the tribunal of ordinary judges, and that non-compliance should be punished with loss of honours and benefices. The refractory who had no benefices should pay a fine, “*ut patronus de infra immunitatem illi iudices ad comitum placita præsentent, et qui non fecerit beneficium et honorem perdat; et qui beneficium non habuerit bannum solvat.*” (Cap. IX. ejusdem anni.)

Francis I. being less fettered by public opinion, which had materially changed, was enabled to pronounce, and did formally pronounce, an absolute

abolition of the asylums. Since that epoch, the churches in France have no longer been open to criminals and closed to justice.

Abolished in England.

Henry VII. had some time previous effected this salutary reform in England ; and Julius II. the contemporary pope, approved instead of opposing the measure.

Maintained in Spain.

Spain, more scrupulous, continues under the yoke imposed by these arrangements of the holy chair. The jurisdiction of the asylums was during a long period uncertain and variable, because the laws of successive pontiffs allowed them no stability.

If the conduct of France and England, has not been imitated in Spain, it is not through want of a conviction that the asylums are prejudicial : but the government is still more strongly convinced that the tranquillity of the state requires the utmost circumspection in such reforms. It prefers therefore the slow but certain means which patience and policy offer, without incurring the inconveniences attendant on too marked and hasty innovations. Custom so identifies man with every thing by which he is surrounded, that he feels a respect for every institution, whether vicious or not, in proportion to its antiquity. Every wise government must adopt for the basis of its system, the character of the peo-

ple subjected to its laws. If the national genius is quick, penetrating, and enlightened, the operations of government may be bold; their correctness being promptly perceived, will make them to be received and respected: but if the genius is slow, thoughtful, contemplative, legislation must more gradually proceed toward its object, that the usefulness of its means may be ascertained.

Reduction of the Asylums.

We can only ascribe to these grand motives, which exist at all times and in all places, the conduct of the king of Spain, in reducing the extent of these asylums previous to their abolition. He at first required his holiness to restrain to a smaller number of temples this privilege, originally common to all. On this demand a bull was issued, dated 12th September, 1772, which orders that throughout the Spanish dominions there shall be but one church of immunity in each place, with the exception of large cities, in which there shall be two, to be designated by the bishops. On the 14th of January following, the king ordered the execution of this bull, and since that period the parochial church in every city or village, alone retains this privilege. In the city of Caraccas, the churches of St. Paul and Alta-Gracia alone, out of seventeen, enjoy the right of asylum.

Legislation of the Asylums.

The history of all the bulls, and all the laws, which have appeared on the subject of the asylums,

would occupy too much space to give entire. The curious reader may be gratified by reading the *Instruction manuelle* of Don Fernando Gonzales de Socueba, who has treated this subject thoroughly. It only falls strictly within my plan to make known the actual state of the asylums.

1. The immunity of the temples applies only to him who has committed homicide by chance, or in his own defence. (*Bull of Clement XII. 1739, confirmed by another bull of Benedict XIV. 15 March, 1751.*) To this it is added that whoever after having wounded any person dangerously, so that his death is apprehended, seeks refuge in a church, shall be delivered up to the secular judges.

2. Those who command or instigate assassinations, shall have no more right to the privilege of the asylums, than those who execute them. (*Bull of Innocent IV.*)

3. The immunity does not avail any person who, being in a privileged place, kills a person who is not in it, and *vice versa*. (*Bull of Benedict XII.*)

4. He who commits the sin against nature, who commits violation, or who makes false money, in the church or in any concealed place of its dependencies, is excluded from the immunity. (*De immunitate ecclesiarum.*)

5. Those guilty of high treason and their accomplices, have not the right of asylum, nor even those who had knowledge of the criminal design, without denouncing it.

6. Those who form conspiracies to deprive the crown of any right, or to detach any possession from

the royal domain, shall not enjoy the asylum—according to the bull *Alias nos*, paragraph 7.

7. Any person who has attempted assassination is deprived of the immunity, though the person assassinated has survived. (*Bulls of Clement XII. and of Benedict XIV.*)

8. The immunity is also refused to an heretic or one suspected of heresy, and to a Jew who, after being converted to the faith has apostatized. (*Pastorale de Benoit XIV.*)

9. He who without sufficient authority, takes by force from the church, those who have sought refuge there, is excluded from the immunity, according to the bulls of Benedict XIII. and Benedict XIV.—and also any person who has prevented the fugitives from reaching the place of asylum.

10. The forger of apostolic or royal letters, is, according to the same popes, denied the privilege of asylum.

11. Any person who, having the direction or management of a public bank, has appropriated the funds either entirely or in part, is without the asylum, according to the same letters.

12. Counterfeiters or clippers of gold or silver coin, even the coin of a foreign prince, provided it has currency in the country, are excluded from the immunity.

13. Those who violate churches in breaking open or burning them are denied the immunity.—(*Bull of Benedict XIII.*)

14. Any one who, having taken refuge in a church for a crime sheltered by the asylum, and is drawn

therefrom under deceitful promises, and is taken without the sacred limits, shall no longer enjoy the immunity, even though he prove the deception practised on him. (*Decree of the Council.*)

15. Those who are taken without the church and who demand to be re-established there, under pretext that they have been drawn from thence at any other time, should not be allowed the asylum.—*Concordat between the holy chair and his Catholic Majesty, in 1737.*)

16. Any one who escapes from prison, where he was confined for a crime unprotected by the immunity, cannot enjoy it, even though he takes refuge in a church ; since his flight, far from having diminished the magnitude of his offence, has tended to increase it. (*Ulpianus.*)

17. Those who escape from prisons where they were confined for light offences ; or those who are already judged, and who in being conducted to prison, encounter a place of asylum, cannot avail themselves of its protection. (*Tolosan, chap. XXII. pag.*)

18. He who is condemned to death, for false testimony, has no asylum, according to *carteli*.

19. The immunity is equally denied to blasphemers, sorcerers, sacrilegious persons, and persons excommunicated, to whom the entrance into the church is prohibited ; for it would be unjust for the church to protect crimes which she herself punishes. (*Papon, chap. XXII.*)

20. Those who are condemned to the galleys or to public labour, can claim no asylum, because the

laws and canons protect the accused, and not the condemned. (*Papon, arrest. lib. 1. tit. 1. de reb. div. &c.*)

21. Debtors have no asylum against their creditors. (*Papon, lib. 1. tit. 1.*)

22. Thieves enjoy no immunity, of whatever species the theft may be ; according to a law of Spain anterior to all others, rendered on this matter by the holy chair.

There are many other offences which the canons, the bulls and the laws have exempted from the ecclesiastic immunity. Their detail would be too long : It is sufficient to say that the asylum, though it extends to very few crimes, is not the less obnoxious to reason, justice and the laws.

The Asylums are injurious to the laws.

The most ordinary offence, and that for which the asylum seems to have been intended, is homicide, either involuntary or committed in self defence. But if that is the principal object of the asylum, its existence is an insult to the law ; for it insinuates that the innocent would be punished with the guilty, if the church did not shelter the head of the former from the indiscriminating sword of the magistrate. What then is this barbarous legislation, which thus confounds crime and virtue, the assassin and the victim ?—What ! a guiltless individual, sufficiently unhappy in having involuntarily cut short the days of a friend, a friend whom he will ever mourn, is condemned to perish on the scaffold equally with the vile assassin

who makes a trade of bathing his hands in the blood of his fellow creatures? The man who rather than passively submit to the dagger of the assassin, has destroyed his insidious foe, must with his head atone for the natural act of self defence!

But on examining the Spanish code, prejudiced as I am against it by the system of asylums, I find there is no law which either expressly or by implication authorises such abuses. They all exact, that to merit the punishment, the offence should have been committed knowingly and voluntarily. They all afford protection to the innocent and display their rigour only against the convicted malefactor. Since the Spanish laws, like those of all other nations, inflict punishment only on the aggressor who is guilty by premeditated design, and to whom the asylum does not extend—of what use then are those asylums? They at least are useless. But can they be useless without being dangerous? No, for it cannot be denied that they are injurious to government, as they weaken and retard its operations.

They embarrass the operation of the law.

A man, who in the Spanish domains, commits homicide, whether voluntary or not, takes refuge in a privileged church: he is claimed by the secular tribunal, and delivered up conditionally. As soon as he is constituted a prisoner his prosecution is commenced, which is communicated entire to the ecclesiastic tribunal, to declare whether the offence by its nature is or is not within the protection of the asy-

lum. If the case is in the least degree doubtful, and often when it is not so, it produces debates between the tribunal organ of canons and bulls—and the tribunal organ of the law.

The minister of the church, always rather inclined to support the immunity, than to avenge the outrage on society, makes a merit of extending the privilege, and considers it an honourable victory over the laws, to place the palm of innocence in the hands of him who merited death. The magistrate, in his turn, believes his authority interested to deprive every fugitive, indiscriminately, of the protection of the asylum. The first believes every thing permitted in the name of humanity; the second, that every thing must yield to the rights of society. How many criminals derive their impunity from this rivalry of power; and how many innocent individuals become its victims! It is true that the question is definitively submitted to the audience; but the audience can only judge upon the documents presented to it; and all the danger of injustice arises from the art with which these documents are drawn up, by a judge jealous of his jurisdiction.

All this proves, beyond a doubt, that the asylums are entirely in favour of crime, by the shackles which they place on justice; and in this respect they can only be considered as insidious vines, with which the ignorance of ancient times have suffered the social tree to be overrun, and which reason cannot too soon remove. There still remain some circumstances to relate concerning them, which enforce more pointedly the necessity of their abolition—since in.

dependent of the evils with which I have already reproached them, it is evident they are the incentives to all the assassinations that are committed. Let us examine them in this point of view.

They encourage assassination.

It is certain that the jurisprudence of asylums is not sufficiently simple, clear and precise, for their extent or limits to be well understood. Even the members of the law are frequently divided on the question, whether the crime of any particular refugee, is susceptible or not of the ecclesiastic immunity. Each case which presents, establishes a process between the tribunal which would condemn, and that which would absolve. The circle of asylums must therefore be badly defined, or great duplicity must exist between the disputing judges. But if questions of this kind appear doubtful even to civilians, whose whole time is occupied by the study of the law, what idea can the vulgar have of them? They know, unfortunately, that such a church enjoys the right of immunity; but they are far from imagining that there are exceptions—and still further from understanding their particulars. If they behold a criminal delivered, in despite of the asylum, to the tribunal of the law, they blame the ignorance or connivance of the ecclesiastical tribunal, and never the restriction of the immunity. What is the consequence? The malefactor who conceives a crime, believes his impunity assured, if he can take refuge in a church, before he is seized by the hand of justice.

Encouraged by this belief, he concert's his scheme, bathes in the blood of a fellow creature, and flies to the foot of the altar, for its ministers to impose silence on the law.

How many murders, how many assassinations are perpetrated in the confidence of being sheltered by an asylum? Or rather, what murder, what assassination occurs, which is not occasioned by this confidence. Not a homicide is committed, but the culpable takes refuge in a privileged church. It is true, this single measure does not suffice, since the question subsequently occurs, whether the crime is of a nature to be excepted or not; but I ask, who would take refuge in a church, if he did not believe that the asylum would effectually screen him from the severity of the laws? Would he not otherwise have preferred the alternative, natural to a culprit, terrified by his crime, of flying to the woods, to the mountains, or to a distant country? It is then his confidence in the asylum, and his persuasion that its power is unlimited, which decide the criminal to place entire reliance therein, for protection from offended justice.

If the assassin acted under a conviction that the temple of the divinity offered him an inviolable asylum, it doubtlessly occasioned the consummation of his crime; it gave action to an offence, which at first existed but in thought. Is not the immunity to be charged with all these dangerous abuses? That assassinations are promoted and multiplied by these sanctuaries is an opinion supported by the manners

of those countries where they are abolished; for in them, assassinations are no longer committed.

Asylums must soon be abolished.

It is to be hoped then, that an institution as fatal to public order as it is contrary to reason, will soon cease to dishonour the Spanish legislation. This reform presents so many objects of utility, that it is impossible the legislator should hesitate in adopting it. It is at the same time so urgent, that he cannot delay without being responsible to God and man, for all the blood which the asylums occasion to be shed. The people are sufficiently enlightened to perceive the justice of this measure. The ministers of the church are too virtuous, too just, too well informed, and too deeply interested in the public tranquillity, not to sacrifice to social order, a privilege which occasions ferocity of manners, nourishes enmities, enforces vengeance, and paralyzes those laws which in every well regulated government should be the sole safeguard of all. I beg the reader to be persuaded, that I am so little the partizan of reforms, that I could not express my wish concerning the one in question, if I was not persuaded, that I am expressing the general opinion of the Spaniards.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE AGRICULTURE AND PREPARATION OF PRODUCE.

Extension of the right of conquest—cession of lands—watering—Property in mort-main—quality of lands—productions—Cacao—Its medicinal virtues—its cultivation—Enemies of the cacao—Means of preserving a cacao plantation—withering of the cacao—Harvest of cacao—Indigo—requisite soil—manner of sowing it—weeding—cutting it—its fabrication—Cotton—almost all soils are suitable—its plantation—treatment—harvest—culling of it—packing—Coffee—suitable soil—manner of planting—weeding—harvest—manner of drying—negligence of the cultivators of Terra Firma—Sugar—soil proper for the cultivation of the cane—canes of Otaiti—plantation of the cane—weeding—maturity and qualities of the cane—cutting of it—young shoots—seasons of grinding—mills—fabrication of sugar—constituent parts of sugar—alkalizing—removal of the scum—prognostics—boiling—crystallization—putting it in forms—stirring it—signs which it gives of good fabrication—on cooling—claying the sugar—(*Terrage*)—manner of drying it—boiling of the syrup—Spanish process of refining—Tobacco—cultivated on the king's account—nurseries of Tobacco—plantations—weeding—Tobacco vermin—growth of Tobacco—signs of its maturity—precautions on gathering it—preparation of dry Tobacco, or *cura seca*—preparation of black Tobacco, or *cura negra*—manner in which the king pays Tobacco to the cultivators—reflections on the cultivation of Terra Firma—first cause of its decline—second cause—third cause—fourth cause—fifth cause—means of encouraging cultivation.

Extension of the right of conquest.

SPAIN, rendered proprietor of America by the famous bull of Alexander VI. acted as if this respectable title gave her, over countries discovered, or to be discovered, a right still more extensive than that derived from ordinary conquest.

She not only stretched her authority over the new world, and gave it laws; but she also took

possession of the lands as if they had not been inhabited.

Several Spanish authors explained, without the aid of the bull of 14th May, 1493, the direct dominion of the king over every thing that appertained to the Indians. This decision, intended to silence the cries of malignity and injustice, is founded upon principles sufficiently singular to deserve the attention of my readers.

The kings of Spain, say Sepulveda, Victor Gregoire Lopez, Joan Mayor, Guerrero, Bozius, Bannes, &c. have legal power of extending their supreme direct domain, even over the lands occupied and peopled by the Indians—*because these same Indians were so barbarous, so gross and so savage, that they scarcely merited to be placed in the rank of men; and that it was necessary that some one should undertake to govern, protect and instruct them; so that conducted to a humane, civil, social, and polite life, they might be worthy to receive the faith, and to embrace the christian religion.* As a discussion of this point of public rights would present but sterile results, I shall pass to the partition of lands.

Concession of Lands.

In 1513, Ferdinand V. commenced rendering of *cedules* for the distribution of lands. According as circumstances demanded, new ones were issued, until the system, in this particular, had acquired its present standing. In the sixteenth century, the por-

tion of land was fixed that should be conceded to each Spaniard. The latter was obliged to build within a certain time on the land granted him; and to cultivate it, under penalty of its reverting to the crown. This limited time was fixed at three months by a cedula of 20th November, 1536.

The viceroys and governors had the right of granting lands, subject to the advice of the cabildos. These favours were to be accorded in preference, to those who contributed to the conquest, or to those who devoted themselves to founding villages, (*conquista dores y pobladores.*) They were forbidden to transmit them, by sale, into the hands of ecclesiastics.

These regulations, and many others, instituted on the same matter, were but little attended to, in the captaincy-general of Caraccas, until the seventeenth century. The lands formerly divided among the conquerors, were sufficiently extensive to gratify every individual. Difficulties, therefore, about the division and possession of lands, should have been very rare, and prosecution still more so; but, in proportion as the ceded lands approached each other, the question of *mine* and *thine* occasioned a recourse to the will of the law, and to the authority of the magistrate.

After many decrees, which it is needless to mention, one was issued on the 25th November, 1735, by which the king reserved to himself the personal exercise of the right of conceding vacant lands, until then exercised by the viceroys and governors. The intention of this measure was evidently to draw

petitions and money to Madrid, but it had little effect—nor was the public utility, which furnished the pretext, much benefited by it. The prospect of enormous expenditures, which always attend official applications far from home, induced those who were not rich, either to give up their lands, or to hold them without a title, rather than incur expenses beyond their abilities, or the value of the lands. The evil, whether quickly perceived or not, was not removed until the instruction of 15th October, 1754.

By this disposition of the king, the audiences were invested with the right of granting lands, and of pronouncing definitively on every thing which concerned them. The sub-delegates, nominated by viceroys and presidents of audiences, were expressly commissioned to prepare all affairs of this nature, so that they might be judged on the simple presentation of the papers, without any expense or delay.

The disorders occasioned by the cedula of 24th November, 1635, were remedied by an ordinance that all those who held lands by grant of the crown, (*terres domaniales*) since 1700, should exhibit their titles to the sub-delegates, who confirmed them of course, if they had been accorded by the viceroys and governors, and if the boundaries of their lands, corresponded with those mentioned in the concession. In default of thus appearing before the sub-delegates, their lands reverted to the crown. If on a survey it was discovered that an estate was more extensive than specified in the concession, the possessor was obliged to purchase the surplus of the

king, at a moderate price—otherwise, even though cultivated, it reverted to the crown and was sold. In short, the sub-delegates had, thenceforth, the right of granting vacant lands, or in other words, to dispose of them to the highest bidder. For the Spanish exchequer did not suffer this means of augmenting its duties to escape unimproved.

The price of lands, as may be supposed, is proportioned to their situation, irrigation and proximity to a large town or a sea-port—if they are cultivated, the species and state of cultivation have a direct influence on their value.

The land is measured by a *fanegada*, forming a square of four hundred and forty feet (French measure) from one angle to another.

Watering.

Irrigation, being the most important agent of vegetation, inasmuch as it renders man independent of the inconstancy of weather and intemperance of seasons : and being, above all, indispensable to cacao, is naturally an object of the first consideration. The multitude of vallies devoted to agriculture, have each their floods, their rivulets and their rivers ; but it is seldom that their waters are equally distributed among plantations where the land is often uneven. The planters, therefore, have often occasion, more or less, to turn the course of streams, to which the neighbours frequently make opposition. From hence arise innumerable law-suits, ruinous and perpetual. More than one half of the causes that

come before the audience of Caraccas, are relative to the distribution of water : and as it is easy to give any kind of face to such actions, either by bribed surveys, by mendicant declarations, by the length and intricacy of writings, and by the sophisms of chicanery ; the tribunal, whose duty it is to pronounce, hesitates, demands new information, and contributes, by its irresolution, to perpetuate and complicate discussion, till it becomes a complete labyrinth, where the opinion of the judge cannot distinguish truth from falsehood, reason from paradox ; all becomes doubt and incertitude except the ruin of clients and the languishing of agriculture.

Possessions in Mortmain.

The laws of the Indians have vainly endeavoured to free Spanish America from the injuries resulting to public prosperity and the fortunes of families, by the possession of territorial property held in mortmain. Different decrees have expressly forbidden the sale or gift of lands, either cultivated or uncultivated, to ecclesiastics, communities or fraternities. A cedula of the 24th October, 1576, addressed to the viceroy of Mexico, says, “ In the mean time you will ordain
 “ that none of the said monasteries of monks or nuns,
 “ shall acquire a purchase, or be able to acquire other
 “ effects or rents than those which they shall possess
 “ at the moment when you receive these presents.” Another cedula of the 20th of May, 1631, addressed to the audience of Quito, contains the same dispositions ; but the national spirit, rarely disposed to

change its direction at the mere voice of the law, and seldom yielding but to the slow impulse of time, employed all possible means to elude the will of the legislator.

For a person to refrain from purchasing his soul by donations of effects which he could not take with him, was considered an impiety, which the legislator did not dare to command, without incurring the risk of being disobeyed. An individual did not precisely give up all his effects at once, under the form of a donation, nor of a sale ; but he charged them with the rent of a capital, more or less important, in favour of such convent, church or fraternity. The son, in his dying donations for the good of his soul, emulated the precautionary liberality of his sire. Hence, additional pious legacies, additional rents assigned on the real property. Thus the landed estates of Terra-Firma have not apparently changed proprietors ; but their value has successively passed, in parts more or less considerable, to convents and churches. Happy, though rare, as I have already observed, is the possession which is exempt from similar tributes.

The interest paid on capitals bequeathed to convents, is called *censos* or *tributos*. It is at the rate of five per cent per annum : an extraordinary tax in a country, where real property of whatever nature, does not pay more than four, exclusive of all duties and expenses. When I come to recapitulate the causes of the stagnation of produce, I shall not omit the mortgages with which the agricultural establishments are overcharged.

Qualities of Soils.

The soil of the part of South America, which I am now describing is, like that of the rest of the globe, varied according to its situation, elevation, distance from the sea, or the vicinity of rivers. It is composed of nearly the same beds as that of the ancient continent. The Baron de Humboldt found foliular granite (*granit folliculaire*) at three hundred and sixty toises above the level of the sea, on the mountain De la Selle of Caraccas (saddle mountain.) He has also found it at the height of one hundred and forty one toises, at cape Codera; and he assures us that from the Unara river unto Saint Martha all the coast is of the same granite. The mountain of Capaya is also composed of a granite which changes into slated talc (talc ardoise.) Vitriolatedfeldspath, slated chlorite (chlorite ardoise.) Limestone large grained with mica, rock chrystal, primitive green rock, (*roche verte primitive*,) silvered galena, (*galene argentee*,) quartz, magnetic sand, red oxide of chrystalized titan, quartz mixed with black lead. Porcelain earth—argillaceous earth, &c. &c. are equally found scattered in the provinces and in the same proportion as in Europe. Argillaceous earth is found in the greatest quantity.

The mould, that part of vegetable earth which, in a manner envelopes our globe, is much less profound in Terra-Firma than in Europe. Philosophy and history are unable to explain, why a new country, where the soil has received since its formation, the deposits of the leaves, branches and trunks of

trees, which successively perish, spring up and perish, to form new deposits, should contradict the natural supposition that the mould should be deep, in proportion to the centuries which have furnished it with the means of increase.

Has this part of the globe, then, experienced particular revolutions, subsequent to those of the ancient continent? Did the sea cover this portion of America for a longer period than Europe? Was it still the dominion of waters, when Asia was already the dominion of man? Or is the powerful action of the sun injurious to the formation of mould, by the rapid desiccation of the vegetable skeleton. These are questions, too evidently springing from conjecture, to be placed in the rank of historic facts. My task confines me to explain the grand fertility of this soil, though almost deprived of the fundamental agent of vegetation. This phenomenon is occasioned by the violent heat of the sun under the torrid zone, and by the immense quantity of rain which falls between the two tropics. Heat and moisture, two fixed principles of vegetation, fertilize the most ungrateful soil, and give to nature that ever smiling aspect, which in the temperate and frozen zones, is checked by the frosts until the vivifying influence of the sun, repairs for some months the ravages of winter.

The vallies of Terra-Firma are most productive, because they enjoy a more equal combination of heat and moisture than other parts. The plains, too much exposed to the ardent rays of the sun, furnish only pasturage, appropriated to the raising of oxen, mules and horses.

Productions.

For a century after the acquisition of Terra Firma, the settlers did not attempt to raise any species of commercial produce. They only disturbed the soil, in search of gold and silver. But not finding in the mines sufficient to satisfy their avidity of riches, they turned their thoughts entirely towards the pearl fishery, which, in a short time being found too inconsiderable to pay the necessary expenses which it required, was also abandoned.

Cacao.

Disappointed in these expectations of speedily amassing wealth, the inhabitants of Venezuela found themselves obliged to procure the objects of exchange, by the slow method of agriculture. They gave the preference to cacao, or rather this was the only production which invited cultivation. Indigenous to America, cacao became one of the principal aliments of the Spaniards, as it had been since time immemorial of the Indians. To the latter it also answered the purposes of money. One hundred and fifty cacao nuts were valued at a rial of eight to the dollar. The relish for chocolate passed, after the conquest, into Spain, where in a little while it was used as generally as in America. It may even be said to have become with the Spaniards, a want which precedes that of bread. It was introduced by the Spanish monks into France.

Its medicinal virtues.

Alphonso de Richelieu, cardinal of Lyons, is the first who made use of chocolate, to cure obstructions in the liver. He must, however, have had an uncommon faith, to attribute that property to chocolate ; for medicine at present is far from acknowledging it. It is generally agreed that those who use chocolate every day, derive no other advantage from it, than what they promise themselves from a nutritive substance. It is nevertheless incontestible, that chocolate thins or thickens the fluids, according as it is more or less roasted. It is beneficial to those attacked with a phthisic or consumption. A confection is made of the cacao, which is serviceable in fortifying the stomach. The oil, extracted from the nuts, is a remedy for colds in the lungs, and against corrosive poisons.

Mr. Henley has lately discovered that chocolate, warm from the mill and cooled in a pewter vessel, becomes highly electric, and even retains this property for some time after it is taken out of the vessel ; but soon loses it on being handled. This power may be restored to it once or twice, by melting it in a large iron ladle, and pouring it as before, into a pewter vessel. But when it is dry and in powder, this power cannot be given to it by the same process. But, if a small quantity of olive oil is well mingled with the chocolate, and the latter melted in a ladle or iron pot, its electricity may be restored, by cooling it in a pewter vessel. From these experiments Mr. Henley conjectures, that there is a great

affinity between the phlogistic and electric fluids, and that perhaps they are the same thing.

Chocolate is at present used throughout Europe ; each nation gives it a particular preparation, which however, can only differ in the degree of thickness or liquidity which they allow it ; or in the quantity of sugar and the quality of the aromatics which they use in its composition. It is remarked also, that the southern nations prefer the oily cacao, whereas those of the north give preference to the dry and bitter.

Its cultivation.

Plantations of cacao were speedily multiplied in Terra-Firma, and the soil so admirably seconded the labours of the planter, that in the yield abundance was united to excellence. The cacao of this quarter, ranks next to that of Soconusco. It is well known that the best commercial recommendation of cacao, is that of coming from Caraccas, or in other words, from Terra-Firma. But even in these provinces the quality varies. The cacao of Orituco is superior to that of other places, and a quantity of equal bulk, weighs twenty per cent more. The cacao of the coast comes next, and obtains a preference over that of the interior.

The plantations of cacao are all to the north of the chain of mountains which coast the sea, and in the interior country. The former extend from Cumana to the mouth of the Tocuyo : the latter are situate in the vallies of Tuy, Orituco, Ocumare, Cura, Mar-rin, Tare, Santa Theresa, Santa Lucia, Zuapira,

Santa Philippo, Barquisemeto, Valencia, Guigue, and Cariaco.

All kinds of soil are not equally adapted to the culture of cacao, still less are all exposures. An analysis of the soil destined to this culture never furnishes indications on which reliance can be placed. No regard should be had to colour or quality ; it is only requisite that it should be free to a certain depth, which is ascertained by the size of the trees with which it is covered ; this sign determines the land proper for cacao.

A suitable situation is not so easily found. It should be as little as possible exposed to the north, and on the borders of a river, which may communicate moisture to the soil in dry seasons, and which may receive its drainings in times of rain. A preference is particularly given to land, which may receive from the river the benefits of irrigation, without being exposed to injury from its overflow.

After having chosen the land, it should be cleared of all trees, shrubs and other plants. This operation is performed in various manners. It is customary in Terra-Firma, to commence felling the trees, immediately after the rains, that is, about the month of November : the wood, after being cut, is left to dry, then collected in heaps and burnt.

As soon as the new plantation is cleared, it is crossed with small ditches, in directions according to the declivity of the soil ; these serve to drain the stagnant waters, to carry off the rains, and to irrigate or water the soil whenever necessary. The *alignement* is then laid out, in which the cacao trees are to be

arranged. They are planted in triangles or squares. In either case, there is always in the centre an alley, bordered by cacao trees, and running from east to west. When they are planted in squares, this alley is crossed by another running from north to south. The cacao plants should be placed at 15 or 16 feet (French measure) from each other, in good soil; and about 13 or 14 feet in soil of inferior quality.

This is almost the only tree in nature to which the enlivening beams of the sun are obnoxious. It requires to be sheltered from their ardour; and the mode of combining this protection with the principles of fertility, forms a very essential part of the talents which its cultivation demands. The cacao tree is mingled with other trees, which guard it from the rays of the sun, without depriving it of the benefit of their heat. The critrine and the banana are employed for this purpose. The latter, by the rapidity of its growth, and the magnitude of its leaves protect it for the first year. The erytrine endures, at least, as long as the cacao; it is not every soil, however, that agrees with it. It perishes after a while, in sandy and clayey soils, but it flourishes in such as combine those two species.

In the Antilles this protection cannot be given to cacao, as it would expose the plantation to destruction by every hurricane. Besides, the cacao succeeds but indifferently there, and is much less oily than in other parts.

The banana and the erytrine are planted in the same *alignement* with the cacao trees.

The quality of the soil, and the species of the ery-

trine, should determine the distance at which they should be placed. That kind which the Spaniards call *bucare anaveo*, is planted in a fertile soil, at the distance of two alleys, that is to say, at each second range of cacao trees. That which they call *bucare peonio*, is placed at the distance of three alleys in good soils (about 48 French feet.)

The former species of erytrine is that which elevates itself the highest. The second species has many thorns, the upper surface of the leaf is darker and the lower whiter. Both kinds should be cut in the wane of the moon, and remain in the shade until its increase, at which time they should be planted. It is much preferable, however, to take them from a nursery.

In one range of cacao trees, a banana is placed between two cacaos, and an erytrine between the two following. In the other range a banana is placed between each cacao tree, and no erytrines, so that the latter are at a distance of two alleys. The banana and the erytrine are first planted, and when a shelter from the sun is thus provided, the hole for the cacao is made, around which are planted four stalks of the yucca plant, at the distance of two feet from each other. At the end of two months the cacao is planted; the smaller the plant is, the better. There are, nevertheless, soils subject to worms, where the small plants do not answer; but, excepting in this particular, the small plants are preferable, because the large require more labour for their transportation and planting, many of them die, and those which survive, bud and shoot forth, but are never of any value.

The cacao plant should not exceed thirty-six inches in size when transplanted; if larger it succeeds with difficulty, as will be shown.

The nurseries of cacao demand an excellent soil, well prepared, where the water does not remain.— They should be well sheltered from the sun. Small knolls of earth are formed, in each of which are put two grains of cacao, in such a manner that they are parallel with the level of the ground. During the first twenty days the seeds are covered with two layers of banana or other leaves. If necessary, the ground is watered; but the water is not suffered to remain. The most suitable time for sowing is in November.

Where there is not a facility of watering, the planting of the cacao should take place in the rainy season; but where the former is practicable, it is best to plant in dry weather and assist nature by irrigation, since it is then in the power of the cultivator to give the exact quantity of moisture necessary. But in all cases, care should be taken that the plants are not wet, in the interval between their being taken out of the ground and replanted.

When the cultivation is from the seed, (which is never the case in the provinces of Caraccas) two grains of cacao are planted in the same manner as before described, so that they are on a level with the surface. They are then covered with a banana leaf, folded three times, on which is placed a small weight to keep it down. As soon as the seeds shoot forth, the banana leaf is removed. If both grains have

sprouted, the feeblest plant is cut, to insure the vigour of the other.

When the bananas grow old they should be carefully felled, lest the cacaos should be injured by their accidental fall. They are totally removed as soon as the erytrines yield sufficient shade; this operation gives more air to the trees of the plantation, and encourages their growth.

Until the cacao plant attains four feet in height, it is trimmed to the stem. If it shoots forth several branches, they are reduced to three, at equal distances; and in proportion as the plant increases, the leaves which appear on the three branches are stripped off. If they bend much, and incline towards the earth, they are tied in bunches, so that the tree may not remain crooked. The branches which are trimmed, are cut at the distance of two fingers from the tree. The suckers which spring from the tree are also removed, as they only live at its expense.

Enemies of the Cacao.

The cacao trees should have sufficient shade to prevent their being burned by the sun. If they are much exposed to its rays, their branches are scattered, crack, and the tree dies. They are also infested with worms which gnaw their bark all around, then attack their interior and destroy them. The only remedy which has hitherto been found, is to employ people to kill these worms, which are deposited by a small scaly winged insect, which gnaws the tree;

as soon as it hears the approach of its destroyers, is lets itself fall and trusts to its wings for safety.

The colour of this insect is a mixture of ash colour and white. If pressed, it emits a sound something similar to the noise of water thrown on a very hot substance. It has two small horns on its head, the points of which are directed upwards. It is so lively that even when the head is separated from the body, it is a long time in dying. To depose its worms it makes small holes in the tree.

At the commencement of the winter or rainy season, another worm makes its appearance, which devours the leaves of the young cacao plant. This species of worm is called *goaseme*, and they are some years so abundant that all the people of the plantation are solely employed in destroying them. This worm is four inches in length, and of the thickness of a finger. It is called *angaripola* or Indian, on account of the vivacity of its colours. It is believed that these worms are mediately produced by other large worms in the earth, from which are engendered butterflies, who lay their eggs on the leaves of the cacao. These eggs are full of small worms which feed on the leaves of the cacao and which are in clusters of the size of a shilling. They are sought and destroyed with great attention, as they occasion considerable damage. Those which escape, lodge themselves in the earth, and in the succeeding year are changed into butterflies. At the time when the worm makes its appearance, it is necessary to make fires, which

should not be so large as to injure the cacao, yet sufficient to attract and burn the butterfly.

The plantations of cacao in the valley of Tuy, the quarters of Marin, Cuba, Sabana, Ocumare, San-Francisco, &c. are subject to another species of worm called *rasquilla*. It multiplies in the dry seasons.

There are small insects, called by the Spaniards *acerredores*, of the same figure with those who eat the bark of the cacao, but larger and of a blackish colour. They eat the branches of the cacao. They are always found upon those branches which they have cut; and the evil can only be obviated by killing them.

The worms called *vachacos* occasion also much injury. They eat the leaf and the flower. To destroy them it is necessary to seek them in their nests in the earth. Water is thrown on the spot and is stirred as in making mortar. By this means their young are crushed and the evil is diminished, if it is not entirely removed.

A creeping plant often attaches itself to a branch of the cacao tree, which it covers and causes to wither, by nourishing itself with the substance of the plant. The only remedy is to remove it: this forms the occupation of the slaves on Sundays.

When the cacao trees are in a state of produce, they are subject to a disease called taint. (*tache*.) This is a black taint or stain which attacks the trees, encircling them below, and kills them. The mode of preservation is to make, in the beginning, a slight notch that shall pierce the bark. But if the taint is

extensive, it is necessary to cut all the affected part. It then discharges a liquid, and is healed. The bark remains of a violet colour in the part that has been tainted.

The other enemies of the cacao are the agouti, stag, squirrel, monkey, &c. The agouti produces most havoc. Its ravages are not confined to what it eats. It occasions others still more injurious, by causing the fruit to fall which grows on the body of the tree. It often destroys in one night all the hopes of the proprietor.

The stag eats the husks or pods of the cacao, while yet tender, with so much voracity that in the body of a stag killed on the banks of the Tuy there was found three hundred unmasticated. Stags are also fond of the buds, which they reach by standing on their hind feet; and on that account are more dangerous by reason of the tender age of the cacao plant. They produce further ravages by striking off the bark with their horns.

Squirrels eat only the liquid exudation of the cacao, without touching the grain; but the fruit is thrown to the ground and is either eaten by some other animal, or lost in the ditches made to carry off the water.

Monkeys devour the grain in the same manner as hogs: the Spaniards call them *goarros*, of which there are several kinds. They occasion great destruction, as they eat the pods, small or large, and throw down with their paws the flowers and young fruit. To drive away all these animals it is necessary to use a gun.

Birds are all not less injurious to the cacao. The whole class of parrots, in particular the great Ara, which destroys for the pleasure of destroying, and the parroquets, which come in numerous flocks, conspire also to ruin the plantations of cacao.

Means of preserving a Cacao plantation.

It is necessary that a cacao plantation should have always shade and irrigation; the branches of the plant should be cleared of the scurf that forms on them; the worms should be destroyed; no large herbs or shrubs should be permitted to grow; since the least disadvantage resulting therefrom, would be the loss of all the fruit that should fall into these thickets. But it is most essential to deepen the trenches which carry off the water, in proportion as the plant increases in size, and as the roots of course pierce deeper: for if the trenches are left at a depth of three feet, while the roots are six feet in the earth, it follows that the lower part of the cacao plant is in a situation of too great humidity and rots at the level of the water. This precaution contributes not only to make the plantation more durable, but also to render the crop more productive. It is necessary also to abstain from cutting any branch from cacao plants already in a state of produce. Such an operation might occasion the subsequent crop to be stronger; but the plants become enervated and often perish, according to the quality of the earth and the number of branches cut off.

If the earth of the plantations is pressed and

trampled by animals, the duration of the plant is diminished. Irrigation, made with judgment, maintains them long in a state of produce.

Withering of the Cacao.

The fruit of the cacao withers on the tree from three causes :

First, when the plantation is, during a long time, inundated with water. I have seen plantations of cacao, which had only been covered with water thirty hours, and of which the fruit was totally withered.

Second, very abundant rains, particularly in very damp vallies. This is only to be remedied by keeping the plantation well drained, that the water may not remain on it.

Third, a want of necessary irrigation, and the watering of the plantation under an ardent sun. The vapour from the earth withers the fruit. If the rains are deficient for a time, and an excessive rain succeeds, the fruit of the cacao also withers.

This desiccation or withering takes place every where ; but in some places the surplus of fruit, which the tree is unable to nourish, is alone subject to it. In others, as Araguaita and Caocaga, it withers in proportion to the northerly rains. The soil occasions another kind of withering. The pods become stunted, containing some good and some bad grains. The Spaniards call this *cocosearse*, which means defective.

Harvest of the Cacao.

The cacao gives two principal crops in a year, one about St. John's day, the other is towards the end of December. The cacao also ripens and is gathered during the whole year. But in all seasons, the people of Terra-Firma make it a point, as far as possible, to collect their crops only at the decline of the moon, because, say they, experience proves that this precaution renders the cacao more solid, and less liable to spoil.

Don Fernando Blanco, an inhabitant of Caraccas, maintains, however, that this is a ridiculous prejudice. He even adds that the practice is impossible; since it would be necessary to make the whole harvest during fifteen days of the decline; but that in thus observing the phases of the moon, the cacao would never be gathered, without much of the fruit rotting on the tree; great advantages would therefore be lost by suspending the harvest during the increase.

To collect the cacao, those negroes and Indians are employed who have the sharpest sight;—that the ripe fruit only may be gathered. The most robust and active are chosen to carry it to the places where the grain is to be shaken out. The aged and maimed are employed to shake out the grain. This operation is performed on a place, well swept, and covered with green leaves, on which they place the cacao. Some open the pod, and others strike out the grain with a small piece of wood, which must not be sharp, lest it should injure the grain.

The good and bad cacao must not be mingled to-

gether. There are four sorts of cacao in every crop : the ripe and in good condition, the green but sound, the worm-eaten and the rotten. The first quality is best, the second is not bad ; but the two others should be rejected.

As soon as that which is not fully ripe begins to shew specks it must be separated. As to the pods which are not perfectly ripe, they should remain in heaps during three days under green banana leaves, that they may ripen before they are hulled. Where the cacao is put in store, great care is necessary not to leave among it any pieces of the pod or leaves, or any other excrementitious particles. This care must be repeated every time that it is removed from the store or replaced in it.

The cacao must always be exposed to the sun, on the fourth day after it has been gathered, and this exposure should be daily repeated until it is perfectly dry. When that is the case, the grains burst on being squeezed, their shell resounds when struck, and they no longer become heated on being placed in heaps : the latter is the best proof that the moisture injurious to their preservation is dissipated. If the cacao is not sufficiently exposed to the sun it becomes mouldy, if too much, it withers and easily pulverises ; in either case it soon rots.

When the quantity of cacao gathered is considerable, it is placed in the sunshine by a hundred quintals at a time, unless the cultivator has a sufficient number of persons employed to expose a greater quantity : this operation is indispensable to prevent it from becoming mouldy. If the rains prevent this expo-

sure to the sun, it is necessary, as soon as it is sufficiently cleared or purified, to spread it in apartments, galleries, or halls, with which the plantations of cacao must be provided : this operation cannot be delayed without danger of losing the crop.

It is to be wished that stoves were employed to dry the cacao when the sun fails, but this expedient, so simple and important, is unknown in Terra-Firma.

It is almost universally believed that the most essential precaution for preserving the cacao, consists in gathering it at the decline of the moon. I believe that they may more seriously calculate on the care of depositing it in apartments, so hermetically closed that the air cannot penetrate : it would be advisable to make these apartments of wood, for the more perfect exclusion of moisture. The floor should be elevated two feet ; under the floor a pan of coals is placed covered with a funnel, the point of which enters into the heap of cacao and there diffuses the vapour. In the apartment which contains the cacao, some persons place bottles of vinegar, slightly stoppered with paper, to prevent the formation of worms.

The cacao, which begins to show specks, may be preserved from entire corruption by a slight application of brine. This occasions a small degree of fermentation, which is sufficient to destroy the worms, and to preserve the cacao during a considerable time from new attacks. Why is not this preservative also employed, after the cacao is dried, and when placed in the store where it awaits the purchaser ?

At St. Philip, they make use of smoke to pre-

serve the cacao: it is also ascertained that fine salt, thrown in small quantities on the cacao protects it from worms.

Much has been done for the cacao, when it has been cleared of all green or dead grains, and of all extraneous articles; when it has received no bruise or injury in the operation of drying; and when it has been subsequently kept in a place that is dry and not exposed to the air: yet, even with all these precautions, cacao of the best quality is seldom found still merchantable at the end of a year.

These circumstances sufficiently prove, that the culture of cacao requires attention more than science, vigilance rather than genius, and assiduity in preference to theory. Choice of ground, distribution and draining of the waters, positions of the trees destined to shade the cacao, are almost the only points which require more than common intelligence. Less expense is also required for an establishment of this kind, than for any other of equal revenue. One slave, as I have already said, is sufficient for the preservation and harvest of a thousand plants, each of which should yield at least one pound of cacao, in ground of moderate quality, and a pound and a half in the best soil. By an averaged calculation, of twenty ounces to each plant, the thousand plants must produce twelve hundred and fifty pounds, which, at the customary price of twenty dollars per hundred, produces two hundred and fifty dollars per annum for each slave or labourer. The expenses of the plantations, including those of utensils, machines,

and buildings, are also less considerable for cacao than for any other produce. The delay of the first crop, and the accidents peculiar to cacao, can alone diminish the number of planters attached to its culture, and induce a preference to other commodities.

The cacao plant is not in a state of perfect produce till the eighth year, in the interior, and the ninth in plantations on the coast. Yet, by a singularity which situation alone can explain, the crops of cacao commence in the sixth year, in the valley of Goapa, and at the east of the mouth of the Tuy. In the vicinity of the line, and on the banks of Rio-Negro, the plantations are in full produce in the fourth, or at most the fifth year.

The cacao tree continues productive to the age of fifty years on the coast, and thirty years in the interior country.

In general the culture and preparation of cacao receive more attention in the eastern part of Terra-Firma than in other places, and even than in the French colonies. It is true that the excellence of soil contributes much to the quality of the article, but, without the assistance derived from art, it would be far from possessing that superiority awarded to it by commerce, over the cacao of every other country.

Indigo.

Cacao was exclusively cultivated in the provinces of Caraccas till a very recent period. In 1774, Don Pablo Orendain, a priest, and Don Antonio Arroide,

applied themselves, to the astonishment of their fellow-citizens, to the culture of indigo, which had previously been attempted and abandoned. All their firmness was requisite to brave the sarcasms of prejudice, which could perceive only folly in requiring indigo from a soil accustomed to yield only cacao.

The first essays was severely censured, the second experienced less severity; and after a short time, this pretended madness found numerous apologists. The force of prejudice could not withstand the test of experience; and it was speedily ascertained that the indigo of Terra-Firma was not inferior in quality to that of Guatemala, the invariable price of which (eighty dollars per hundred) is more than the indigo of any other part of the globe will command.

All new plantations were from that time prepared for indigo, and the vallies of Aragoa, chosen for this new species of culture, experienced an unexampled and astonishing rapidity of increase. Immense plains till then uncultivated, were covered, as if by enchantment, with plantations of indigo. The concurrence of cultivators and the profits resulting from the indigo occasioned many villages to spring from nothing, and gave to others which were then in a state of ruin, as Maracay, Tulmero, and Victoria, the smiling aspect and substantial consistence of cities. The culture of indigo has extended from the vallies of Aragoa to the southwest as far as Varinas: on the coast none of it is seen, nor eastward of Caraccas to the gulph of Paria, nor southward to the Oronoko.

The soil requisite for Indigo.

Indigo is one of those plants which require a light soil and warm climate.* The land destined for it should be well cleared and drained : for the same

* It has been believed till the present day, that the indigo plant flourishes only in the climate of the torrid zone, and in those parts of the temperate zone which are near the tropics.—Experiments recently made by Bruley in Italy, by order of government, have proved that nature has not excluded Europe from the possession of this plant. It is only requisite to choose, in a southern climate, a suitable soil and exposure, to profit of the season most favourable to vegetation, to sow good seed, and the principal difficulties will disappear. Those which appertain to the manufacture of the indigo would readily yield to a union of talent and observation. With these precautions and these expedients, M. Bruley has obtained the indigo plant in the gardens of the chateau de la Venerie near Turin ; and by submitting it to the process employed at St. Domingo he extracted an indigo which might bear comparison with the finest indigo of the colonies.

M. Bruley made his plantations towards the end of February. They gave him three cuttings of a plant handsomer than those produced by the generality of land in the torrid zone ; for it rose to the height of five feet, while that in America rarely exceeds three feet. It also furnished an equal quantity of indigo, with that given by a plant of equal bulk, in the colonies. These remarks, it is true, are only warranted by small experiments : possibly, they would experience some variation in larger undertakings.

M. Icard de Bataligni, another colonist, proprietor at St. Domingo and a man of excellent observation, cultivates the indigo plant at this moment, (1805,) in the department of Vaucluse.—His results confirm the hopes formed, with respect to the culture of indigo in Europe.

degree of humidity which favours the nourishment of the plants, is fatal to indigo.

In ground on which indigo is to be sown, the wood should be cut four months before it is set on fire. The flames consume it then more readily, to the stumps. The lines or rows are then to be immediately traced; and the earth being thus well cleared, the seeds are to be sown under favour of the first rain, and three months suffice to produce a good crop.

Mode of Sowing.

Attention is due to the choice of seed and to the manner of making the holes which receive it. They should be three inches deep and two feet distant in good land, but ten inches only in land of bad quality. In the French colonies the holes are but two inches deep and only from five to six inches distant. The quality of the soil requires it. It is customary to make these holes in strait lines; but at Terra-Firma they also plant in beds, and those who have adopted this method, extol it with as much warmth as every systematist employs to defend a new system. In each hole as many grains are thrown as can be taken between the finger and thumb: they are then covered with an inch of earth. It is of no use to sow fields of indigo except in time of rain; the earth must have already imbibed water, or rain must speedily follow the sowing: otherwise the seed becomes heated, corrupts, and is lost with all the labour it has occasioned.

Weeding.

Provided the season favours vegetation, the indigo begins to sprout the fourth day, often even on the third. At the end of fifteen days it is already assailed by herbs which dispute its subsistence, and which finish by destroying it, if the hoe is not speedily employed.

Not only the abundance of the crop, but even the manufacture and quality of the indigo, absolutely require the weeding to be so scrupulously performed as to remove every other plant. If this care is not rigorously employed, difficulties will occur in the fabrication which cannot be obviated after the appearance of the indigo. They are occasioned by other herbs being cut and carried to the vat (or *cuve*) with the indigo. These herbs give, by fermentation, a juice which deranges all the signs of fabrication, and prevents by its interference, the developement and re-union of the essential parts of the indigo. The indigo thus obtained is bad in quality and less in quantity than the crop promised.

The cutting of Indigo.

After three months, the indigo is commonly fit to cut, and this operation is far from immaterial. It has also its rules and its procedure. The first object of attention is the maturity of the indigo: the second, to cut the plant one inch from the earth. To cut it higher may retard the shoots of a second cutting, or may even entirely prevent them. Large crooked

knives are much more convenient for this purpose than any other instrument ; and at the same time more advantageous with regard to the subsequent crops.

The indigo plant is transplanted as soon as cut, to the place where art must give it the form, under which it becomes merchandise. All the implements necessary for the chemical process are reduced to three great vats (or *cuves*) of mason-work, built one above the other in such manner that the middle cuve can receive the liquid from that which is above it, and can discharge it into that which is below. The first and most elevated is called *la pourriture* or *trempoire* ; and is much larger than the other two. In the French colonies, it is from ten to twelve feet long, nine or ten broad, and three deep. In the province of Venezuela it is from eighteen to twenty feet long, fourteen or fifteen feet broad, and only twenty inches deep.

The second *cuve* bears the name of *batterie*. It is not so wide as the *pourriture* but much deeper, that the water may be agitated in it without escaping over the edge.

The third *cuve*, smaller than the preceding, is called *bassinot* or *repository*. It is there that the indigo undergoes the last operation. But the most essential article to an indigo maker, is a rapid and very limpid stream of water, that may be employed at pleasure in the fabrication of the indigo.

Fabrication, or manufacture of Indigo.

I come now to speak of the fabrication or manufacture, which appears in these places so simple, easy, and natural that it is confided to negroes who know nothing, or to whites who are equally ignorant.—Both are incapable of giving a reason for the slightest cause ; but they know admirably well how to command effects, and to obtain by practice, results of which the most skilful chemists would be proud.

The blue colouring substance known to us under the name of indigo, is combined with heterogeneous articles from which the manufacturer must disengage it. This combination is so intimate that it eludes the nicest eye. Like many other results it appears to be the product of a peculiar operation, the effect of which gives great satisfaction : but we are groping in the dark when we endeavour to pursue the causes which have contributed to produce it.

The whole body of the plant, compressed in a certain quantity of water, enters into an extremely active fermentation, of which we will notice the details. •

In proportion as the caloric increases, azote is disengaged, the herbaceous mucilage separates, the vegetable is decomposed, the mixture absorbs oxygen. At first the liquor takes in the basin a green tinge. It is strongly agitated, that the elements of the vegetable may subtilize, and the fermentation speedily augments to the highest degree. The fermenting fluid passes from a green to a violet tinge, and this by degrees changes to a blue colour.

The first fermentation takes place in the *trempoire*, in which very clear water had been previously placed. The plant is prevented from swimming by being pressed beneath the surface. The state of the plant, the ground that produced it, and the season in which it was cut, are guides to direct the manufacturer. This fermentation takes place more or less promptly, according to causes which concur to hasten or retard it. Ten, twenty and thirty hours are most frequently the term: it rarely requires a longer time. In Terra-Firma, when not prevented by the state of the plant, nature of the soil, or the season, twelve hours suffice for the fermentation. The great art of the fabricator is to check it at a proper degree. If the fermentation is too feeble or too brief, the plant remains impregnated with much essential salt, which diminishes the quantity of the indigo. If it is too long, the tender extremities of the plant undergo a putrefaction which destroys the colour.

The odour of the fermenting liquid, and the numerous flies which fly over it, are signs to which the indigo-makers of Terra-Firma attach most weight. There was published at St. Domingo, some years ago, the following criterion to ascertain invariably the correct fermentation of the indigo.

It is only requisite to write on white paper with the matter to be examined. If this ink is of very high colour it is a proof that the fermentation is not yet at its true point. The experiment is repeated every quarter of an hour, till it is perceived that the liquid has lost its colour. This was pronounced an

infallible index to show the true point of fermentation.

This test had its time and its mode ; but the planters returned to the use of the silver cup.

When the fermentation is advanced, some of the liquid is thrown into a silver cup, and shaken till grains are formed ; by their quality and that of the fluid they judge of the fermentation. In this experiment, the best method is to draw off the liquid, by means of a spout or cock, from the cuve into the cup.*

* The active genius and constant observation of the inhabitants of St. Domingo, have carried the preparation of colonial produce to a degree of perfection which the neighbouring colonies have been unable to attain. The fabrication of indigo alone, seemed condemned to be the perpetual sport of chance, and the caprice of circumstances. Its success was always doubtful. The fabricator of indigo who only lost a tenth of the cuves, or vats, of that plant, was considered as skilful. There were some who lost a fourth. The honour of ascertaining invariable rules was reserved for the intelligence and experience of M. Nazon, an inhabitant of the quarter of Mirbalais. The arts are indebted to him for certain marks, according to which, indigo is made upon principles as constant as those which direct the refiner in the manufacture of sugar. M. Bruley, who has imparted this discovery in an excellent memoir upon indigo, read in the lyceum of the arts, on the 30th Floreal, year 9, expresses himself thus : These “ precious advantages France will henceforth enjoy. She owes “ it to the labours and the intelligence of citizen Nazon, a col- “ onist, and a proprietor at St. Domingo, but at present in “ France, and an associate of the lyceum. By judicious obser- “ vations and long experience, he has been enabled to secure the “ success of all the cuves of indigo.

“ To obtain this colouring substance the indigo plant must be “ cut in its maturity. It must be put entire to macerate in a

After signs of complete fermentation are obtained, the whole contents of the cuve are passed into the batterie, where it undergoes another process still

“ basin of mason-work called a *cuve*. The dimensions of it are
 “ twelve feet, French measure. *quatre metres*.

“ The maceration requires from fifteen to thirty and even
 “ thirty-six hours, more or less according to the temperature that
 “ is experienced at the moment. It is also necessary to have re-
 “ gard to the quality of the plant, the nature of the soil that pro-
 “ duced it, and that of the water in which it is immersed.

“ The first index which shows that the maceration approaches
 “ its proper point, is the sinking of the scum or foam which rises
 “ into the space of about a sixteenth of a *metre*, that was left va-
 “ cant in the cuve on compressing the herbs. [*a metre is three*
 “ *feet*.] When the cuve is covered with a kind of crust of a cop-
 “ per blue, the moment of sufficient maceration is not far dis-
 “ tant. This symptom, however, is insufficient, and often deceitful.
 “ There is another on which more reliance can be placed : that
 “ is to draw from a spout or cock in the inferior part of the cuve,
 “ a little of the fluid it contains. It is received in a silver cup :
 “ when the feculent particles begin to precipitate to the bottom of
 “ the cup, then it is judged that the herbs have attained the true
 “ degree of maceration for obtaining indigo.

“ Such was the procedure most in use, but it too often led to
 “ error. A certain mean to insure correctness, is to observe
 “ carefully the water contained in the cup. Five or six minutes
 “ after it has been placed there, it forms round the sides of the
 “ cup a glory (*aureole*) or cordon of feculæ or sediment, at first of
 “ a green colour, and then blue. When the maceration is not
 “ at the requisite point, this cordon or girdle, has difficulty to de-
 “ tach itself from the sides of the cup, but finally precipitates,
 “ and concentrates at the bottoms of the vase, always towards the
 “ centre, and the water above it becomes limpid, though of a
 “ yellowish tinge.

“ When these signs are perceived, they indicate, infallibly, the
 “ success of this first operation. The liquid is then passed into

more important, as it is intended to separate the carbonic acid, and to facilitate the re-union of the particles composing the blue feculæ or sediment. This object is obtained by violently agitating the fluid.—No less care, attention and experience are requisite in this, than in the preceding operation. According as it is well or ill performed it may correct the errors

“ a second basin or cuve, made below the former. This second
 “ cuve is called *batterie*, because its use is to beat the fluid, still
 “ charged with the feculæ. That it may speedily detach itself,
 “ it is stirred: this operation is performed with the arm, or
 “ with a mill. It is essential that it be not beaten too long a time.
 “ Excess of beating mixes anew the feculæ with the water, from
 “ which they cannot be again separated, and the contents of the
 “ cuve are lost : in place of indigo, only troubled water is obtained.

“ The latter inconvenience may be easily avoided with a little
 “ attention. When it is observed that the feculent particles are
 “ sufficiently united, the water is poured from the *batterie* into a
 “ third and smaller basin or cuve, called *diablotin*. The bottom
 “ of the *batterie* is found covered with a blue and very liquid paste :
 “ this is received in sacks of coarse linen in form of reversed
 “ cones ; and the watery parts are left to drain from them. The
 “ sacks are then emptied upon tables in the *sechoirs* or drying
 “ places ; the blue paste is kneaded ; when it becomes thick, it
 “ is spread and cut in small squares, that it may the sooner be-
 “ come dry. The indigo is then made and is soon sufficiently
 “ dry to be merchantable.

“ I suppress details, contained in a much longer memoir, of
 “ which I furnish only an extract. It was important to make
 “ known, that there exists a certain process, by pursuing which
 “ there is no fear of being deceived in the fabrication of indigo.

“ Experience has proved that this process has never failed to pro-
 “ duce complete success : more than fifteen hundred cuves, fa-
 “ bricated according to it in different quarters of St. Domingo,
 “ have furnished proofs of its correctness.”

of imperfect fermentation, or may occasion the loss of indigo, which has thus far been correctly fabricated. If it is not sufficiently beaten, the grain is left diffused in the water, without re-uniting at the bottom of the cuve ; the mass of feculent matter that forms the indigo, is also diminished. If it is beaten too much, the grain is dissolved and broken.

The facility with which the grain precipitates to the bottom of the *batterie* is an unequivocal sign that the beating has arrived at the correct point. We should not hesitate to pour off the water, and to empty the miry or feculent matter into the third cuve or *riposoir*.

It only remains to put the indigo in sacks, which should be suspended to facilitate the expression of the water it still retains. It is then put to dry in the sun, in boxes made for the purpose. Before it is perfectly dry, it is cut in small pieces of an inch square, which detach themselves readily from the box when the indigo is entirely dry.

The inhabitants of Terra-Firma dry the indigo under sheds. This method is more tedious, but is favourable to the quality of the indigo. Its combination is more intimate, as is proved by the hardness it acquires. The different actions it experiences increases its lustre. In short, the weight in proportion to bulk, is greater than that of indigo dried in the sun. Yet however well drained and dried the indigo may be, it always experiences, in the first months of its fabrication, a diminution sufficiently evident to warrant a hastening of the sale.

It is customary to pack the indigo in barrels and thus to circulate it in commerce. The Spaniards alone, put it in packages of a hundred pounds, and so well conditioned, that the rough usage they encounter between the place of manufacture and the sea-port, does not occasion any damage.

Indigo is packed in sacks of coarse linen, and the sack is covered with a beef's hide, so hermetically sewed that nothing can penetrate it. These packets are called *ceroons*. They possess great advantages over barrels. They are more solid; may fall on stones without incurring danger; and are much more convenient for transportation. Two *ceroons* make the load of one animal. They are stowed to much greater advantage in stores and buildings.—And in their circulation in Europe, they have much less to fear from the carelessness or unskilfulness of carriers.

Cotton.

Indigo had scarcely obtained a distinguished rank among the commercial productions of Terra-Firma, when the same honour was sought for cotton; which till that time, was ranked among a thousand local productions applicable to domestic uses, but unworthy to figure in commerce by the side of cacao. A hundred plants formed about the proportion of the largest plantation. In 1782 some planters effected that for cotton, which others had unsuccessfully attempted for indigo. The vallies of Aragoa, Valencia, Araure, Barquisimeto, Varinas, Cumana.

and successively several other places in the provinces of Caraccas, assigned a part of their territory to the cultivation of this plant.

Most grounds suitable for Cotton.

The cotton plant, says Valmont de Bomare, is one of the most useful productions furnished by nature in either continent, and manufactured with art by human industry. There is perhaps none less delicate respecting the nature of soil. It grows on almost all lands, and if any preference is shown, it is in favour of those grounds which other vegetables reject. It only requires particularly to be protected from the north winds, which are destructive to it, by reason of the drizzling rains which accompany or follow them. Heavy rains are equally injurious. The same degree of humidity which gives vigour to the vegetation of coffee, cacao and the sugar cane, occasions the cotton plant to perish.

The parish of Trou, situate in the northern part of St. Domingo, experienced five years of extraordinary drought, which commenced in 1772. The plains covered with sugar canes, and the hills cultivated with coffee, were afflicted with a desolating sterility. M. Chevalier, an inhabitant of that quarter, took occasion in 1776 to sow his grounds with cotton, and gathered prodigious crops. All the sufferers by that calamity imitated his example, when in 1777, the rains having resumed their ordinary course, destroyed all the cotton plants, and restored to the soil its former productions.

The cotton tree requires, therefore, land which, by its position and natural productions, repels clouds rather than attracts them, and which is not exposed to the north. The coast from cape de la Vela to cape Paria is, from its bearing, improper for the culture of cotton ; of course we find there no establishments of this kind.

Cotton plantation.

The only preparation that the soil destined for cotton requires, is the removal of trees, shrubs and other plants. When the ground is well cleared, they proceed to the planting of cotton. The season most proper for the colonies of the gulph of Mexico, is during the four months of June, July, August and September. In the dependencies of Caraccas they only plant in May and June, because, as the cotton plants blossom always in the month of November, those which had been planted in July and August would be surprised by the blossoming season, before they had reached their natural growth, and had acquired the consistence necessary to perfect fructification.

We in general plant cotton trees, in the French colonies, in a quincunx form. This mode requires more time and skill, but has advantages which entitle it to a preference. In Terra-Firma they plant on straight lines drawn with a cord, and separated by a space of seven or eight feet. The holes to receive the seed are four feet distant from each other, and in each, five or six grains are thrown. When half the

number rise, the plantation is fortunate. In fifteen days the young plant begins to shoot ; at this period a light rain assists it ; but it does not make very evident progress during the first five or six weeks. It is then weeded, that no other plant may share with it the nutritive juices of the earth, and only two or three of the strongest stalks are left in each cluster.

Treatment of the Cotton Plant.

In the Antilles, no weeding succeeds the first till the fourth month ; and then the plant is pruned, by cutting the length of an inch or more, from the stalk as well as the branches. It is seldom necessary to repeat this operation, as the cotton tree stops at the height of five feet, and the sap does not diffuse itself into useless or superfluous branches. But in Terra-Firma the richness of the soil, or rather the activity of its principles of vegetation, require that the pruning should commence in the first month, and should be repeated every month at the decline of the moon, till the blossoming season. The first pruning should be made without cutting, and only with the finger and thumb, that the tree, which is yet tender, may not be injured. After the first time a knife is always employed, to check the growth of the tree to the height of six feet. The weeding should also be repeated every month, until the cotton tree has attained sufficient size to cover the soil with its branches, and by its shade, prevent any herb from growing.

From the fifth to the sixth month, the plant furnishes abundance of flowers, to which succeed the husks or pods containing the seeds, enveloped in a down which is called cotton.

Its Harvest.

After the seventh month the cotton bursts the pod, and, if not gathered in time, it falls to the ground and is spoiled. Violent winds and heavy rains, which happen during the cotton harvest, occasion considerable losses to the planter. It is not merely at this epoch, that the cotton plant experiences many risks. Its seed, softened by the developement of the germ, is devoured by worms, wood lice, and scarabs. In the first month of its existence it is attacked by crickets, who effect their ravages in the night. Its leaves, while tender, are the pastures of insects called *diablotins* (little devils.) An infinitude of other worms, contribute equally to its loss in our colonies.

The worms have never visited the cotton plant in the vallies of Aragoa until the year 1802, and their appearance then, has been attributed to the abundant rains which fell in the four preceding years.

As soon as the harvest is finished, some French planters, and the English generally, cut the cotton plant, the former merely every second or third year, the latter every year, and within three or four inches of the ground. The Spanish, as well as the generality of the French, are of opinion, that in replanting it every year, they are insured a better crop, and in conformity to this belief, all the planters who have

sufficient hands to perform this increase of labour, renew every year, their plantations of cotton.

Several of them have assured me, that the shoots of the cotton plant do not give half the quantity of cotton yielded by the original plant.

Cleansing.

It is not merely in its cultivation that the cotton requires most care ; it derives its value chiefly from the manner in which it is prepared. The cleaning or picking, is unquestionably the most delicate operation ; it is above all essential, that the cotton should be freed from the grains which it envelopes in the pod, and that these grains should be removed whole. If broken, they impart yellow stains to the cotton, which diminish in value, in proportion to the extent of the damage. The principal merit of cotton consists in its whiteness ; and whatever contributes to deprive it of that quality, does it a material injury.

The most advisable mode of cleansing the cotton perfectly, is to pick it with the hands, but its slowness is discouraging. A workman, whatever may be his activity, cannot clean more than eight pounds per day. This sole operation, therefore, would employ more hands, and more time than the whole cultivation ; and would cause expenses, which would increase enormously the price of cotton. This is assigned as the cause why its cultivation has been so much retarded in Terra Firma. In fact, it experienced no increase, until mills for cleaning cotton were introduced. The use of these machines has so ra-

pidly become general, that some habitations possess from twenty to twenty-five. With the assistance of one of them, a person can clean with ease, twenty-five pounds of cotton per day. In the vallies of Aragoa, several of the inhabitants have submitted these machines to hydraulic power, and save thereby much expense and time. The purity of the cotton is greatly affected by the materials, of which the small cylinders, adapted to these machines, are constructed. Wooden rollers cleanse the cotton less expeditiously, but they cleanse it better; those of iron bruise the grains, break the stalk, and singularly alter its quality. At Cumana, Barquisimeto and Narinas, wooden rollers only are used, and the cotton from those parts, has a marked superiority to that from the vallies of Aragoa, where they use none but iron cylinders.

Packing or baling.

In general the Spaniards are less careful of their cotton than the French, English, or, above all, the Dutch: but they pack it better. Instead of packing it up, like other nations, in bales heavy and incommodious, of which the weight, which is three hundred pounds, render the management and transportation difficult, and the size occasions it to be ill adapted to storage, the Spanish make small packages of a quintal, and reduced to so small a compass by the aid of presses, that each package is not more than fifteen inches in length, nor from ten to twelve in breadth. The package is generally covered with

an ox's hide, skilfully arranged, so as to protect the cotton from all damage. This method is certainly recommendable to universal adoption.

The colonies, it is true, possessing but few horned cattle, cannot give to their cotton the same envelope which is used by the Spaniards; they can only imitate the form of the package, and reason dictates that is the most advisable.

Perhaps it is no disadvantage to the colonists that they cannot employ hides in this manner, since I am assured, at the moment I am writing, that this usage ought to be proscribed, because the hide, when wet emits a liquor which stains the cotton, renders it more difficult to be spun, and less proper for manufacturing.

Coffee.

The produce which, next to cotton, engaged the attention of the Spaniards of eastern Terra-Firma, was coffee. The colonies of every other nation have for more than fifty years carried on a considerable commerce in this article, while in the Spanish possessions it was uniformly cultivated merely for domestic consumption.

In 1784, D. Barthelemy Blandin, encouraged by the example of the French colonies, devoted his property and care exclusively to the cultivation of coffee. The land which he chose in the valley of Chacao, within one league of Caraccas, proves that he was guided in his choice of a situation, rather by its proximity to the city, than by fertility of soil; and

the establishments which he has successively effected there, attest his perseverance rather than his ambition. In fact, throughout the whole extent of the provinces of Caraccas, there is scarcely another valley so little adapted to the culture of coffee, as that of Chacao, particularly in the part to the north of the great road which crosses it.

Dr. Sligo, priest of the oratorial, gave at the same time the preference to coffee, and employed himself in cultivating it, if not with as much success, at least with as much assiduity as Blandin—and in the same valley. The eyes of all the province were fixed upon these two cultivators; and they had their imitators, in proportion to the progress of their new culture. The valley of Aragoa, where it seems that all the activity of the Spanish is concentrated, was the first to adopt this new branch of cultivation, and it rapidly passed from one end of these provinces to the other. Not only all the new plantations, commenced since 1796, are in coffee, but many of the inhabitants have abandoned cacao and indigo and cultivated it in preference. This has been principally occasioned by the long war from 1793 to 1801: the seas, covered with English cruisers, offering no prospect to commerce but that of inevitable losses, the communication with the mother country was cut off, and the different articles of produce remained in the hands of the colonists, at least that of cacao: since, as will be shown in chap. VIII. the other articles were not in want of a market. It is well known that cacao will not keep for more than ten months or a year, and that after such time, it loses its value; it

was natural therefore, for the colonists to substitute in its place another produce of quicker sale, or which might wait in the magazines for a change in politics, with less risk of damage than cacao; and the article which presented these advantages was coffee.

It must not be supposed, however, that this culture has attained all the increase of which it is susceptible in a soil so extensive and fertile as that of Terra-Firma. The quantity produced, independent of what is used for domestic consumption, does not exceed one million pounds.

Suitable Soil.

All land within the extent of sixty leagues crossed by the line, is suitable for the cultivation of coffee, excepting land composed of hard and cold clay, or light and sandy ground on a bed of marle. The leaves of the coffee planted in such soils, turn yellow, and the tree perishes or is barren. It requires, in preference, a soil new and free, a little elevated, where the coolness and the rains moderate the excessive heat of the torrid zone, which would overpower the plant if exposed to all its violence.

A rule equally easy and invariable in forming a coffee plantation, is to choose land newly cleared.—The size of the trees is the most certain standard by which to judge of the fertility of the soil. Mountains or hills, the elevation is unimportant, provided the thermometer of Reaumer never descends below ten or twelve degrees. The plantation should be ex-

posed as little as possible to the north ; but this precaution is more necessary in the Antilles than at Terra Firma, particularly if at a sufficient distance from the sea to be protected from the salt air, which withers the coffee.

The first operation necessary in forming a coffee plantation, is to clear away the trees ; and the manner of doing this depends upon the character of the land. If it is level, or only in gentle declivities, it should be carefully cleared of the stumps, after having burnt all which the axe could reach. But if the soil is mountainous, the stumps are necessary to prevent the ravages made by the torrents, which sweep away with them more or less rapidly, in proportion to the violence of the rains, the bed of vegetable earth, which is the depositary of all the principles of fertility. How many plantations have been rendered sterile, as soon as cleared, by the neglect of this precaution. The soil of mountains always wears away quickly because of the waste occasioned by the rains. This effect may be easily retarded, but it is impossible to prevent it entirely.

Mode of planting.

The land destined for the coffee being well cleared, holes are made for the new plant, in such order as the planter may think proper, and at the distance required by the ground.

The cultivation of coffee is not sufficiently advanced in Terra Firma, nor the soil sufficiently scrutinized to endure the adopting any other method than

that of planting the coffee in parallel lines more or less distant from each other, and the holes more or less separated. But the time will probably arrive, when industry, eager to convert every thing to profit, will not disdain to avail itself of the results effected by the talents and emulation of its neighbours. It is for such a period that I would recommend the method of planting in triangles, a method the more profitable, since it saves nearly the sixth part of the land.

A square of ground planted in triangles of seven plants, gives two thousand nine hundred and twenty-six coffee plants ; if in squares of seven plants it only gives two thousand five hundred ; if in squares of ten, it gives twelve hundred and twenty five ; if in triangles of ten, it yields fourteen hundred and forty one.

To plant in triangles, a cord must be stretched, divided by knots at the proposed distances. Suppose seven : place a coffee plant at each knot. For the second range, have two sticks of seven feet in length ; place the end of one of the sticks at the last plant, and the end of the other stick at the first ; bring the other ends of the sticks to touch and they form the summit of an equilateral triangle. At the point thus formed, place a stake, to which fasten the cord divided by knots. The same operation is observed at the end of the cord. It is fixed and a plant of coffee deposited at each knot. The other ranges are formed in the same manner.

In whatever manner the planting is performed

the distance of the holes should always, as I have observed, be proportioned to the richness of the soil ; the more fertile the land the greater should be the distance between the plants. This, like all other useful truths, had to combat with custom and prejudice, but experience soon insured to it, in our colonies, the respect due to true principles. In fact, it was natural to suppose that, on an equal surface, a greater number of plants would yield more coffee than a less one. The influence of light and air on vegetation was not as yet theoretically known there. They groped on in the majestic career of the operations of nature. They made all kinds of experiments, and the preference was given to that which succeeded the best. As they are instigated to these observations, rather by the avidity of riches, than the love of science, they profit themselves of the results, without analyzing the causes.

It was the custom at first to place the coffee plants at the same distance in every kind of soil, and interest dictated to plant them very close. The common distances was from four to five feet ; after several years, it was discovered that this mode obtained good crops on poor land ; where the land was most fertile, the plants had the appearance of the greatest beauty when budding and flowering. They increased in size ; their branches were entangled and became so bushy, that the planter feared lest they should break under the load of fruit, with which they promised to be burthened : but, scarcely had they acquired this luxuriant appearance, when nature, exhausted by her premature liberality, ceased her benefits, and

left the cultivator confounded and disheartened by so fatal a phenomenon. It was finally thought proper to increase the distance between the plants, and by degrees this distance was entirely regulated by the nature of the soil. In the poorest lands, it should not be less than four feet ; and in the most fertile, never less than eight. Prudence and interest must point out the just proportion.

A judicious planter regulates also the depth of the holes to the quality of the soil. The deeper the bed of vegetable earth, the deeper he makes the holes, and *vice versa* ; for the grand object is to prevent the roots from penetrating to the stony stratum and perishing. At all events, the coffee may be planted in grains or in shrubs, as it is done at St. Domingo,* but it neither yields as much, nor as quickly, neither does it endure so long, as if taken from a nursery.—

* “ In order to procure the coffee plant, they go under the old trees and pull up the young bushes produced by the fall of the ripe fruit. They transport them in bundles, from one plantation to another ; after having cut off a part of their roots they place them in the holes prepared for their reception.— This method is defective ; a great part of the plants procured in this manner, independent of the faults in their formation, which they may have acquired under the parent tree, are subject also to the disadvantage of having never been exposed to the ardour of the sun ; they therefore present no certainty of success to the planter. The planters are often obliged to recommence their plantations for several successive years, before they are regularly established.

“ I avoided this inconvenience, by an expedient which several planters have since adopted.

The choice of soil for the nurseries demands more attention than would be supposed. If the soil is ungrateful, the plant will not have the requisite quantity of that animating principle which constitutes its vigour, and removal to a better soil will never obviate this original defect. If, on the contrary, the soil of the nursery, is much richer than that of the plantation, the young plant will not find, in the new soil to which it is translated, an equal quantity of that carbonic acid which contributes so powerfully to augment the energy of vegetable life ; and it will inevitably decay.

It is rare, however, that the failure of plantations is ascribed to this cause, when every appearance would otherwise warrant their perfect success.

The young plants should be taken up with all their roots, and planted in the same state. They should be two feet high. They are covered with earth two inches above their roots, and cut at ten inches above

“ I sowed the coffee grains at six inches distance, in a quincunx, in soil prepared for that purpose. The nursery that sprung from them was watered and treated with care : from thence I took the young plants necessary to form my plantations. When they were to be transplanted from the nursery, care was had to water well the ground, and the small plant was taken up with the earth which surrounded its roots.

“ It may easily be imagined that the plants thus transported from the nursery, would suffer no alteration nor delay in their vegetation : the plantations also were regular. Very few plants had need to be replaced ; none were defective in their formation ; they were all accustomed to the scorching heat of the sun, and I tempered the effect of it on the soil where the plants were placed, by heaping flints around them which preserved a freshness even in the driest season. All those coffee plants offered the advan-

the surface of the earth, leaving nothing but the stem.

The season for planting coffee is not very important in land which contains sufficient watery principles, to perform the grand work of vegetation. But in general, it is most adviseable to plant shortly before the rains.

It is important to fruitfulness that the plants should be lopped off at a certain height, regulated by the quality of the soil. In the poorest land, they are trimmed at two feet and a half, and in the best, at four or five feet. The planters of Terra-Firma allow their plants, commonly, a height of only four feet.—They maintain, with reason, that a greater elevation renders the harvest of the coffee difficult and imperfect. This attention, however, is not general; for there are many who do not lop the plants at all, and who suffer them to have their full growth, which nature has fixed at from twenty-four to twenty-six feet.

Weeding.

The precautions necessary to be observed in planting the coffee, would be useless if not followed by those required in freeing the plants from the quantity of herbs, which dispute with them the nutritious

tages of being handsomer, stronger, and yielding sooner than those of my neighbours, planted at the same time according to the ancient manner. I am assured also, that even now, these plantations, although neglected like all those of St. Domingo, are very beautiful. (*Memoire sur le Cafier*, read at the public sitting of the Lycee des Arts, le 30 pluviöse, an 9, by M. Bruley, a member, of that and several learned societies, colonial proprietor at St. Domingo.”)

matters and the principles of increase which they receive from the soil, the air and the light. The coffee plants need assistance to conquer these enemies of their existence, only during the first two years; for in proportion as their branches extend, they cover sufficient land to deprive the herbs of the air and light necessary to their propagation and increase. M. Bruley observes, very properly, that it is more recommendable, for preventing the reproduction of the herbs and the injury of the soil, to pull them up by hand rather than to destroy them with the hoe.

Between the ranges of the young coffee plants, sufficient vegetables may be raised for the consumption of the plantation. The prudent planter never fails to avail himself of the advantage which a cultivated soil offers, for having all vegetables he has occasion for, without any further trouble than that of planting them.

Unless great contrarieties happen in the season or the soil, the coffee plants give a light crop, in the second year, and are in full bearing in the third. Each plant yields according to the nature of the soil. At St. Domingo they calculate one pound to a plant; at Jamaica, one pound and a half; and at Terra Firma, two pounds.

Several causes are injurious to the coffee harvest. Drought is one. The plant requires much rain, excepting during the time of blossoming, for then the rains destroy the flowers and all prospect of fruit. A too great quantity of cherries with which the tree is loaded, is another. The tree cannot furnish sufficient of the nourishing juices for this superabundance of fruit; a great many grains are therefore spoiled. Ano-

ther cause is the quantity of herbs, which, through the negligence of the cultivator, usurp a part of the nourishment from the young coffee plants; they diminish the quantity of them, and singularly affect their quality. Insects, running vines of the nature of the misletoe, &c. fogs and hurricanes, injure also the cultivation of coffee.

Harvest.

We now come to speak of its harvest, an article the more important, since the beauty, goodness and price of the coffee depends on the manner in which it is gathered and prepared. The process is simple and easy; it demands neither great talents, nor profound chemical information; it does not consist of a learned combination of matters, submitted to be analysed, or destined to change their form and acquire new properties.

All that is necessary is the knowledge when to collect, clean and dry the grain, without impairing any of those qualities, which serve to augment its price and consumption, as nothing is requisite to attain this end, but precision and very simple machines; attention, care and exactness are more than sufficient to form a good manufacturer of coffee. It must not be supposed, however, that this simplicity is so great, that it is impossible to prepare the coffee otherwise than well. This operation, like all the works of man, is subject to divers systems, and opposite opinions. We have not yet, and it is probable that we never shall have, a single art, whose principles and process are irrevocably recognized and observed by all those who cul-

tivate it, and the fabrication of coffee is not sufficiently ancient in America, nor sufficiently diffused, nor conducted theoretically enough, to form an exception to this general rule. It is necessary, therefore, that experience should form by degrees the path which should conduct to its perfection. To this effect, it is peculiarly useful that the various modes followed, not only by the different colonial nations, but also by each planter, should be known, in order that their results, of which commerce can only judge, should decide to which mode preference should be given.

The country entitled to the highest rank in the culture of coffee, is Arabia Felix. Either from the superiority of its soil, or from the method observed there in preparing this article of produce, or perhaps from both, the coffee of this country, commands three times the price of that of any other. The mere denomination of *moka coffee* commands this superiority. The preparation which it receives, exacts, it is true, cares too minute and tedious to be entirely suitable to considerable plantations; but they are not, therefore, the less necessary to be known, that the principles may be adopted on which they are founded, and that they may be observed as far as localities will permit.

When the Arabian cultivator, says M. Bryan Edwards, sees that his coffee is ripe, he spreads large cloths over the trees, which he shakes from time to time to make the ripe cherries fall. He never pulls one grain of coffee, with the hand, whatever appearance it may have of maturity. He considers none as ripe, but such as fall, on lightly shaking the tree. This process, more or less rigorously ob-

served, serves at least to confirm the principle, that perfect maturity is an essential requisite for obtaining good coffee.

The grains thus gathered are exposed to the sun on mats with their pulps, until they are perfectly dry ; which requires a long time. Their dry envelope is then removed, by means of a large stone cylinder, and they are replaced in the sun ; for the planters of Yemen are persuaded that the coffee is apt to ferment, as long as it retains any particle of humidity. It is then winnowed, and packed in bales for merchandize. This practice indicates, that the coffee can never be too dry.

The English follow, in their colonies, nearly the same method that we observe in ours. As soon as the cherries of the coffee acquire a deep red colour, they are sufficiently ripe to be collected. The negroes, employed in this work, have a coarse linen bag, which is retained open by means of a hoop, placed in its mouth. It is suspended to the neck of the negro who gathers ; and he empties it into a large basket. If the negro is in the least active, he can collect three bushels in a day. But he should not be hurried, lest, to accelerate his work, he should mingle green grains with those which are ripe. Each harvest is made in three jobs, because all the grains do not ripen together. At each time, those only are gathered which are perfectly mature. One hundred bushels of cherries, just from the tree, yields about one thousand pounds of merchantable coffee.

Mode of Drying.

The coffee is dried in two manners: the first is, to place the cherries in the sun, in layers of four inches thick, on sloping terraces, or on inclined platforms.

They ferment in a few days, and the pulp discharges itself in the fermentation. The coffee is thus left until it is entirely dry, which is not in less than three weeks. The skin of the cherries, already broken, is removed by mills made expressly for that purpose. In default of mills, recourse is had to mortars. The coffee, thus prepared, whatever its quality, weighs five per cent more than that which has received a different preparation.

The other method is, to separate at once the grain of the coffee from the pulp. This is done by an appropriate mill, and they are left to soak in water for twenty-four hours. After this operation, the grain is placed in the sun, that it may be promptly and perfectly dried.

These two manners of preparing coffee, have each many advocates and many opposers. The latter, perhaps, is the most advantageous, being the most expeditious, but there is no doubt but that the first preserves most the flavour of the coffee, particularly if attention is paid to prevent its too great fermentation on the terraces or platforms. This might easily be obviated by making the layer less thick, that is to say, in giving more room to the cherries which are to be dried.

It still remains, to strip the grain of coffee from

the pellicule, with which it is immediately covered, and which is called parchment. For this also, use is made of mills which art, animated by interest, is simplifying and perfecting every day.

Lastly, nothing further is wanting than to winnow the coffee mingled with the grindings and dust of the parchment. This is effected by mills, of which the mechanism varies according to circumstances and judgment. The coffee is then put in bags, and sent for sale to the nearest sea port.

Negligence of the Cultivators of Terra-Firma.

The Spaniards of eastern Terra-Firma, do not bestow equal care on their coffee, as it receives from other nations. The disposition of nature, which seems inclined to give the Moka coffee a dangerous rival in this country, so overwhelmed with her benefits, is thwarted by the carelessness of the Spanish planters. They particularly neglect the weeding of it; so much so, that the young plants have to struggle continually against the herbs which attack their existence.

The same negligence extends to their manner of gathering the coffee. The cherry which commences to redden, as well as that which is quite red, are indiscriminately gathered and delivered to the process of preparation, which is not itself exempt from defect.

But every thing announces that these evils will not be of long duration. As a proof of this, I will give

the information which is propagated, the emulation which is established, the activity which revives, the interest which is revealed, and the laudable ambition which manifests itself.

Sugar.

The sugar is the prime article of commercial produce in all the colonies situated between the tropics. At Terra-Firma it enjoys only a secondary grade. There is very little, if any, exportation of it ; for, if we except a few quintals of poor, coarse sugar, charged with all its molasses, which the Spaniards term *papelon*, and which is carried to the island of Curra-coa for consumption, it may safely be asserted that, unless by chance, not one pound is exported. Not that there are not many sugar plantations spread throughout the province of Venezuela, but that all their revenues are consumed on the spot. The Spaniards are generally very fond of sweatmeats, and every thing composed of sugar ; and the Spaniards of Terra-Firma, above all, have the greatest passion for sugar. All, without distinction of condition, fortune, or colour, make sugar the greatest article of consumption. An intoxicating beverage, called *goa-rapo*, results from the fermentation of sugar in water, and is so common in Terra-Firma, that all classes make use of it—particularly those of an inferior rank. This custom gives rise to a great demand for sugar.

The most important part of a rich man's repast, is confectionary. In a banquet, the desert is the ser-

vice on which all his ostentation is lavished. I have partaken of repasts given to forty or fifty persons, where more than three hundred dishes of sugars, in every form and shape, were tastefully arranged on a different table from that where we had been served with meats, and were destined to captivate the admiration of the guests. To sum up all, in one word, there is not a negro, whether a slave or free who, though perhaps restricted to but one meal per day, does not make it with a little cacao, boiled in a great deal of water, and a large lump of coarse sugar, which he eats like bread, sipping and relishing his porringer of chocolate, or rather tincture of cacao. This beverage is called *chorote*. However small the quantity of cacao mingled therein, its universal usage cannot but contribute considerably to the consumption of that article. In fact, by calculations within bounds, it is estimated, that they consume, within the sole province of Venezuela, forty thousand quintals of cacao per annum, and much more of sugar.

Land, proper for the cultivation of the Sugar Cane.

The variety and extent of land in the provinces of Caraccas, readily afford soil proper for the cultivation of the sugar cane. Establishments of this kind, are generally in the environs of towns, because there the sugar finds a vent, and the proximity of them, facilitates cultivation. There are some, however, at twenty leagues distance; but in a

country so vast, where some planters have ten or twelve days travelling before they reach their plantations, the distance of twenty leagues appears moderate.

The sugar cane delights in hot climates,* and particular soils. Humid soils, hills, sandy plains, such as those to the north of the Oronoko, in the environs of Coro, Maracaibo, &c. promise no success to this species of culture.

* The sugar cane gives incontestibly the preference to hot countries: there are, in fact, none too hot for it; but it may be had also, with all its properties, in the temperate zone north, unto as far distant as the tropic of Cancer. In Spain it is cultivated with success in the kingdom of Grenada, situated between the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth degrees of northern latitude. It can be cultivated much farther north, since at Paris they have obtained sugar well chrystalized, from canes reared in the garden of plants.

M. de Cossigny, proprietor in the Isle of France, member of several learned societies, and of the agricultural society of Paris, on his return from a voyage made in 1801, to the Isle of France, brought several sugar canes with him, which his care had preserved in good condition. He gave them to the garden of plants at Paris, with the sole intention of augmenting the nomenclature of exotic plants. Necessary precautions were taken to preserve them from cold. But on the 31st of May, 1804, M. de Cossigny having judged from the appearance of the canes which they had produced, that they contained the saccharine particles, in as great proportion as the canes of the torrid zone, and equally easy to be extracted, requested and obtained them from M. Thouin, administrating professor of the museum of natural history.

Those canes were cut to the number of fifteen, and after having lopped off their tops, it was found that the smallest was six

The sugar cane requires a rich soil, and of which the mould is at least one foot in depth. It should also be free, for clayey land, and all others where the water filtrates with difficulty, yield meagre canes, the sugar of which will not defray the expense of their cultivation. The sugar prefers rather a fat and ash-coloured soil. Land of this double quality, yields always a great deal of very handsome sugar. It must be admitted, that the planters of Terra-Firma are well skilled in distinguishing the kind of soil which each production demands. The quality of their different articles of produce, is an indisputable proof thereof.

feet in height, and that one of them was twelve. They weighed thirty-nine pounds twelve ounces, which, by means of two pressings, rendered nineteen pounds one ounce, an uncommon yield. The colour of that of the first pressing, was greenish, and gave nine degrees to the areometer of salts. The second pressing is made, by adding water to the husks of the canes : this juice weighed a little less than four degrees.

M. de Cossigny submitted the first juice to the process of fabrication, at the house of Messieurs Boume and Margueron, apothecaries, rue Saint Honore, where, in presence of experienced men, assembled for this purpose, they made sugar, similar in every respect to that which is made in our colonies, excepting that it was a little fat, because the canes were produced in a soil too much manured. The thirty-nine pounds twelve ounces of juice, gave about twenty-four ounces of handsome powder sugar.

This invaluable experiment, honourable to the zeal and talents of its author, may induce individuals, in the southern departments, to profit of the most suitable exposures for cultivating the sugar cane.

Cane of Otaiti.

All the sugar plantations of Terra-Firma were sown with the same cane as our colonies, until in 1796, they brought from Trinidad, the plant of the cane of Otaiti, of which they soon perceived so clearly the advantage, that every one hastened to substitute it in place of the ancient cane.

It cannot be disputed that every appearance is in favour of the cane of Otaiti; it is, at least, double the size of the other cane, and is much higher; it consequently contains much more juice. As its planting, its treatment, and the cutting of it, does not occasion more labour than the Creole cane, the result is, that in the same time, and with the same lands, an augmentation of revenue is obtained.

It ripens, in the same season, much sooner than the cane of the country; while this has need of sixteen months, the former ripens in twelve; by this also is gained one-quarter of the revenue. Sufficient time has not yet elapsed to ascertain, whether the suckers will yield in the proportion of the parent cane, and how many times they may be cut, before transplanted.

The enthusiasm which has prevailed among the planters for this cane, has prevented them from perceiving any except its good qualities. They are silent on its defects; but time will teach them, that the sugar obtained from the cane of Otaiti, contains infinitely less of the essential salt, than that yielded by the ancient cane. Three pounds of the

former scarcely sugars as much as two pounds of the latter ; there is, therefore, a real loss of thirty-three and a third per cent, which commerce in Europe does not fail to deduct from the price. Sixty francs, for example, is offered for a quintal of the sugar of the cane of Otaiti, while ninety is given for that of the Creole cane. To this loss must be added the carting, freight, and storage of a quintal of this sugar, although it does not represent more than the value of sixty-six pounds and two-thirds of ordinary sugar, and it will be perceived that its pretended advantages, which are exaggerated, will scarcely compensate the losses which are passed over in silence. Nor is this all ; this sugar, abounding more in mucilage than in essential salt, is susceptible of but a feeble consistence, which is far from insuring it from decomposition, during the time of its exportation to Europe, and of its storage until the time of sale, or unto the place of a second exportation. This sugar, therefore, cannot be denominated a produce truly commercial ;* it is, at most, proper for consumption in the same

* It is about four years since M. Hapel de Lachennaye, chemist, commissioned by the government to Guadaloupe, announced to the agricultural society at Paris, that he had discovered the means of giving to the sugar, proceeding from the canes of Otaiti, the consistence necessary for preventing the decomposition to which it is subject. He did not make his method known.—The most natural is to augment its degree of boiling, but this is not done except at the expense of the quantity and quality of the sugar ; for the concentration of it diminishes necessarily the quantity, and renders it less proper to receive the benefits of claying. If his method is different, and does not produce these effects, such discovery does him infinite honour.

places where it is manufactured ; and its value will necessarily diminish in proportion as the use of it increases, since its comparative defects will then be more clearly perceived. All these reasons, I am assured, determined several planters of the island of Cuba, who had adopted the cane of Otaiti, to resume the cultivation of the Creole cane, fully resolved to make no further experiments on this article. The eyes of the inhabitants of Terra Firma are not so readily opened, because, selling their sugar in the province, interest will not give them any alarm, until the consumer shall have known the difference which exists between these two kinds of sugar.

Planting of the Sugar Cane.

The sugar cane is propagated by itself. When it is cut to be passed through the mill, they lop off about one foot from its top, for the purpose of planting. The place assigned for the plantation, is then marked out into squares, something like our gardens, that by planting them successively, the canes of each square may ripen in the same order, allowing time to each to be cut and the sugar fabricated, without the other canes suffering. The French call these squares *pieces de canies*, they are generally of four squares; the English divide them by fifteen and twenty acres, which they call *plats*; the Spaniards of Terra Firma make their divisions, of a hundred vares* square, each vare of thirty-one inches three tenths of a French foot, and they call them *tablones*; at Havanna they make them double and call them *canaverales*, which

* A French measure.

signifies also a piece of ground covered with sugar canes.

That time is chosen for planting of the sugar cane, when, according to the order of the seasons, rain may be expected. This election is particularly observed, where there is not a facility of irrigation: for the assistance of water is essential to the perfect germination of the plant. Without water the cane does not thrive, nor does it ever acquire, even though favoured by the season, that degree of vigour and that saccharine juice for which it is remarked when properly watered either by art or nature.

For planting the cane holes are made with a hoe; which are fifteen inches long, ten wide, and six deep. In this work, which is the most laborious appertaining to the sugar plantation, only male negroes and the most robust negresses are employed. Each slave can make, in ordinary ground, from sixty to eighty of these holes in a day; but if the ground has been previously ploughed, as is practised at Jamaica, a negro can make double the number.

The distance between the holes must be determined by the nature of the soil. During a long time, it was believed that they should be nearer each other in proportion as the soil was richer; because the earth having more nutritious juices could nourish a greater number of plants. This opinion was specious, but was soon exchanged for one more philosophical; and it has been perceived that when the canes are too crowded, they must reciprocally impede each other's growth and maturity. Depriving themselves by this near approach, of air and light, the two most potent

agents of their existence and vigour, they always present the aspect of abortions in place of thriving canes. It is sufficient to apply to poor and meagre land those principles, which have been applied to ground of a fertile nature. The conclusion follows that the canes should be planted distant in proportion to the fecundity of the soil : thus, in the poorest land they are planted three feet apart, and six feet in the richest.

Although the holes have only been made to the depth of six inches, yet the earth which has been dug out, being left on the edges, they appear to have a depth of more than a foot. Three cane plants are laid in each hole, and they are covered with only three inches of earth and without pressure. This is the business of children, or of hands belonging to the plantation, who are only capable of light work. The residuc of the earth is left on the side of the pit, so that persons unacquainted with these labours would imagine the plantation not yet made.

When the plantation is in marshy ground, where there is apprehension that the plant will rot, care is taken not to *lay* the cane in the pit. One end of it only is put to the bottom of the pit, and the plant is placed in an inclined position, so that from four to five inches are above the ground. This is called planting *en canon*, because the plant resembles a cannon pointed. I am far from recommending plantations of this kind ; they never pay the expenses they occasion.

If it is determined absolutely to force nature, by establishing on marshy ground, a sugar plantation, which will cost immense labour before it becomes productive, prudence and interest require that the

ground should be previously drained. If the want of a declivity forms an insuperable obstacle, one expedient remains, more tedious, yet still more advantageous to the land. Let the rain water be drawn from all parts and collected upon the soil intended to be drained: having deposited the earthy particles with which it was charged, and become clear, it should be released by opening the sluices, and this operation should be repeated according as the rains permit. This process unites the double advantage of elevating the soil, and of producing a bed of vegetable earth, from which it derives peculiar fecundity. This kind of land is always too vigorous for the sugar cane. The plant acquires an astonishing increase, but is so watery, that the most skilful refiner is unable to obtain sugar from it. This defect is corrected by planting the ground with rice for two successive years. The planting of rice has the singular and double advantage of elevating the land by the stocks it leaves, and of subduing it by drawing off the subtile juices. When the rice ceases to be productive, the sugar cane replaces it very advantageously. This method of correcting marshy grounds, through the assistance of rain water, is doubly serviceable to lands in the neighbourhood of the sea, because it frees them at the same time from those saline particles which are unfriendly to vegetation. Let us return to our plant.

Weeding.

At the end of five days or more, but ten at the utmost, the young cane shows itself under the form of

a single stalk, which is divided in a few days, into two small, slender and opposite leaves. In proportion as the young plant increases, it puts forth two leaves in the same order with the first. At this period it requires rain, or artificial watering. It soon becomes indispensably necessary to remove the weeds, which would, otherwise choke it; and the application of the hoe must be two or three times repeated, until the cane becomes sufficiently strong to choke, in turn, every strange plant. On each weeding attention should be given to cover the young plant with part of the earth, left on the edges of each hole at the time of planting.

Maturity and qualities of the Cane.

The sugar cane ripens according to the season it experiences: rains retard, drought accelerates its maturity. Much depends also on the nature of the soil. In rich and moist lands the cane does not ripen under sixteen or seventeen months, while in a light soil, it ripens two months earlier. In the ninth month, the plant begins to cast its leaves. Those nearest the foot of the cane fall first, and the others in succession; so that by the time the plant arrives at maturity, the cluster of leaves which terminates it, alone remains.

At the same time the cane assumes a yellow colour, an infallible sign of the good quality of the sugar it contains. It is not thus with the canes of marshy lands, and hollows or bottoms; they retain the green colour, whatever may be their age, and thus announce to the refiner the difficulty he will experience in obtaining the sugar.

The distance of the joints furnishes also a certain

criterion to determine the quality of the cane : in proportion as they are nearer to each other, the plant is inferior. It is of importance in the manufacture of sugar, to take the cane at the true point of its maturity. Before this period it will yield much water, and but little sugar. If it is over ripe, a much smaller quantity of sugar is obtained, than the cane would yield if taken at the proper time ; the manufacture will also be more difficult and the quality inferior. Accidents too often render it necessary to pass canes which are not ripe to the mill : for instance, when a fire consumes all that is combustible in a field of canes, or when a furious hurricane has beat down the canes, already too far advanced to admit the hope that they will rise again. It is in these cases more prudent to make nothing but syrup : the attempt to make sugar may be fruitless ; and the process of the fabrication may occupy so much time that a great portion of the canes will become heated to such degree as no longer to yield even syrup.

Cutting the Cane—Shoots.

The sugar cane should be cut with a bill, (*serpe*) very near the root and at a small distance from the cluster of leaves at the summit. A piece of the tender part of the cane, near the summit, is then retained for the purpose of planting. After the large canes, or the first which proceed from the plant, are removed, the young shoots are left, and require only weeding, and fair weather. Good land furnishes as many as five crops of shoots—that is to say, one may cut a plantation of canes five times without replanting.

At each cutting, however, the quantity of sugar is less. A piece of cane, of four squares which yields at the first cutting seven hundred forms of rough sugar, each weighing fifty-four pounds, will only give from its first shoots six hundred forms; the second shoots five hundred, the third four hundred and twenty, and so on in like proportion. In bad ground the disproportion is much greater. The second shoots in such plantations rarely yield half the quantity furnished at the first cutting by the large canes. They are therefore replanted as often as the strength of the establishment will permit.

Time of grinding the Cane.

The season of the year in which the cane is cut, influences much the quantity of sugar obtained from it. During November and the four succeeding months, it yields a third more sugar than in the other seven months. This rule is general, but varies in particular places. In the northern part of St. Domingo, much advantage results from grinding, or making sugar in the season I have named, but without the difference being so great as to prevent its manufacture during the rest of the year. In the western and southern parts of the same island, all the labour of the plantation, that relates to the grinding or manufacture of the sugar, is exclusively performed in the good season. In Terra-Firma they manufacture sugar during the whole of the year: but there, as in the other places, the five months I have designated are preferred.

The labours of the sugar plantation must be so distributed that the different operations go on at the same time ; while some negroes cut the canes, others convey them to the mill, where they are ground as fast as they arrive. The juice extracted from the cane, is immediately subjected to the process for converting it into sugar. Every thing must be done at once. If the sugar cane is not pressed as soon as cut, it undergoes a fermentation, which affects the saccharine parts, rendering the manufacture very difficult, and the results less favourable. If the juice of the cane is not exposed to the fire as soon as expressed, it contracts a degree of acidity, which greatly embarrasses the refiner. The French colonists are so well convinced of the celerity requisite in these different operations, that from the moment when they begin to cut the cane, the labours of the plantation continue night and day. The negroes are divided into four companies or relieves, like sailors in the navigation of a vessel, and there is no intermission except on sunday.

Nature of the Mills.

The mill for expressing the canes is composed of three iron cylinders. One in the centre, to which the moving power is applied, turns the other two, by means of teeth, of iron or wood, at the upper parts of the three cylinders. These mills are worked by water or by mules. The former unite the valuable advantages of celerity and economy of animals.— One water-mill, constructed with accurate dimensions will furnish, in twenty-four hours, sufficient juice of

the cane for a hundred and sixty forms of rough sugar, each weighing fifty-four pounds ; unless poverty of soil, or an unfriendly season should present impediments. A mill worked with mules, in whatever manner it may be conducted, will not furnish more than half the quantity. Those sugar-works in Terra Firma which deserve the name of manufactories, have all water-mills. It would be unpardonable, in a country so well watered, not to apply to this use that fluid which is every where to be obtained, and in as great quantities as can be desired. The dependency of Caraccas is indebted for many of its water-mills to a mill-wright named Dupont, a creole of Martinique, whom the events of the revolution cast on these strange and distant shores in 1791. His works are far from being models of perfection, but the quantity of water that can be furnished in this country to these machines, is competent to correct all geometrical defects, provided the true mechanic structure is observed.

Manufacture of Sugar.

The juice of the cane passes directly from the mill, through a canal, into a large basin which is placed in the sugar-works, by the largest of five cauldrons. The collective name of these cauldrons, which are of different sizes, is *equipage*. The first cauldron, called *la grande*, because it is the largest, is usually fifty-four inches in diameter ; the second is named *la propre* ; the third, *le flambeau* ;

the fourth, *le sirop* ; the fifth, *la batterie*. It is in the latter that the sugar receives the last degree of boiling.

These cauldrons are placed in the same line, and by the side of each other : they are fixed in mason-work over a stove or kiln, the focus of which is under that called *la batterie*, and from which a canal passes beneath the five cauldrons, allowing the smoke to escape through a chimney by the side of the largest. The *equipage*, consisting of these cauldrons, is in general placed behind the wall of the sugar house.— But a short time previous to the revolution, they began to adopt a method of erecting the *equipage* in the middle of the sugar house, with a view to employ two skimmers at each cauldron, and to disengage the sugar more promptly and completely, from all heterogeneous articles. To *equipages* of this kind, they adapted *two batteries*, situated after the cauldron called *le sirop*, and in such manner that each could have a stove or furnace under it, that the fire might be nourished by two mouths, and the boiling of the sugar hastened ; for the experience of a century has proved that the sugar is handsomer in proportion to the violence of the ebullition. Modern chemistry will therefore, have much difficulty in communicating to our colonies its apprehension lest a portion of the sugar should be burnt in the cauldrons in which the syrup is boiled ; and its advice, to effect the evaporation with less fire, will not be followed. Every thing is employed, on the contrary, to augment the action of the fire in the sugar-houses. An *equipage* is well or ill made, a furnace or stove, more or less

perfect, in proportion as they facilitate the ebullition. To favour this operation still more, they employ for fuel the leaves which the canes cast off in ripening, and which have dried on the places where they fell. The *bagasse* (or cane which has passed through the mill and become dry) is employed also for the same purpose. It is observed that a good workman, obtains with the leaves and the *bagasse* a fire much more violent and more equal than that obtained with wood. There is also an advantage attending this kind of fuel, as the action of the fire can be moderated at pleasure. At the moment when the attendant ceases to throw this fuel into the stove the violence of the heat is necessarily diminished, and this is very useful with regard to the just degree of boiling.

As soon as the boiling is sufficient, the fire is checked, that the sugar may be removed, without experiencing more ebullition at its own expense. This advantage cannot be obtained with wood of any kind; for it deposits in the furnace a bed of ardent coals, which maintains the violence of the fire much longer than is necessary, and reduces to a candied state, that part of the sugar which is more immediately at the bottom of the cauldron.

On Terra-Firma, where wood alone is used to manufacture sugar, they calculate the boiling, by including that which the sugar will acquire during its removal; but this estimate requires an accuracy of judgment so rarely met with, that the sugar most frequently either wants the requisite degree of boiling, or has exceeded it. In employing for fuel the leaves or straw, and the *bagasses*, or cane that has passed

the mill, these inconveniencies are avoided, and the labour is saved of negroes whom the Spaniards employ to cut and transport the wood. Besides, when the season prevents the providing of wood, the grinding is necessarily suspended, and all the works suffer: while, with good stores of *bagasse*, these extraordinary labours may be saved, and at any time of the year the cane may be cut, and the sugar manufactured.

Constituent parts of Sugar.

Before we speak of the process by which sugar is extracted from the *vesou*, or juice of the cane, it will be proper to notice the nature of its constituent parts. But how shall we decide a question, on which there is so much difference of opinion? Chemistry, that science founded upon facts, whose problems, aided by demonstration, rank as truths—chemistry will be long involved in doubts and conjectures with regard to sugar.

Some chemists maintain that the heterogeneous materials of sugar are a fecula, or sediment, an extract, and a colouring matter, which become separated by evaporation. Others think that it is only necessary to obtain by simple evaporation and the action of fire, a diminution of the water and a reunion of the particles of sugar thus facilitating the coagulation and separation of the feculæ and the colouring matter.

There are some who consider sugar as a saline substance, and as holding a middle station between mucilage and essential salts.

English planters reckon in its composition eight parts of water, one of sugar, and one of thick oil and mucilaginous gum, with a portion of essential oil; and it is on these principles that they manufacture sugar.

French colonists merely suppose that the juice or *vesou* is composed of a great portion of superabundant water which evaporates by ebullition, and some acids or mucilages, from which it is necessary to disengage the saccharine part. To produce neutralization, they oppose to these acids a proportionate quantity of alkali, in order that the effervescence made by the alkali with the acid, assisted by ebullition, may exhibit them under the form of a saponaceous scum, which is removed with skimmers made for that purpose.

Whether or not this system accords with the great principles of chemistry, it is certain that by observing it the French colonists obtain a sugar which, for chrysalization and whiteness, defies rivalship in the markets of Europe.

Use of Lye, or Alkali.

The agents employed to alkalize the juice of the cane, are quick-lime, ashes, potash, &c. they have not found any vegetable alkali to produce as good effects. Some, however, of the systematic colonists have chosen to depart from the customary usage, through an expectation to attract public attention by some useful discovery. But their experiments have generally been made at the expense of their interests; and, according to the docility or obstinacy of their

characters, they have sooner or later resumed that method which self-love had induced them to abandon. The only allowable variation is, according to the nature of the soil, to complete the alkalization with potash in the cauldron called *flambeau*, or in that called *sirop*, after quick-lime has already extracted the greatest part of the mucilages and other heterogeneous articles.

The ashes of common wood injure materially the quality of the sugar : rendering it brown, without chrystals and without consistence.

It is some time since an inhabitant of Jamaica fell on a plan of alkalizing sugar with the ashes of the pimento tree, of fern, or of campeachy wood. The advantages resulting from this method were verified, published, and compensated by the colonial assembly. It decreed to M. Bousie, author of the discovery, the sum of 1000 pounds sterling. The use of lime was on the point of experiencing a disgraceful proscription, when it was ascertained by commerce that sugar alkalized in this manner would not bear the sea ; because these ashes evidently impeded the intimate union of the particles. Lime recovered therefore the consideration it had began to lose, and the system of M. Bousie obtained only from public generosity a publication, in which it was declared that lime and ashes might be conjointly employed, provided the refiner was skilful in combining them.

It is from the just proportion of the alkali to the heterogeneous parts, that we must hope for the handsomest sugar. The great art of the refiner is therefore to ascertain this point. The nature of the canes

which furnished the juice, the lands in which they were cultivated, and the season which prevailed during their maturity, announce that greater or less degree of alkali is necessary. The appearance, odour, and taste of the juice itself, indicate also whether little or much alkali is required. But these signs are merely approximative. They only become precise and infallible in the course of the manufacture; and as it is infinitely more easy to correct defects arising from too little than from too much lime, the refiner uses at first but two-thirds of the quantity that he thinks requisite for perfect saturation. The lime is thrown into the first or great cauldron, the liquid being cold. The juice is slightly agitated, that the lime may be equally diffused. A conflict presently ensues between the alkali and the acid or mucilaginous parts; and these are thrown by the strong ebullition to the surface under the form of a scum, in which the eye and the touch recognize saponaceous properties.

Removal of the Scum.

One negro at least to each cauldron, is constantly employed in removing the scum, and frequently one is not sufficient. The skimmer performs, without dispute, the most important part in the manufacture of sugar. From his activity results the good or bad quality. All the other conditions necessary to produce handsome sugar will be of no avail, if it is badly skimmed. This operation is began in the cauldron, called *propre*; sometimes, but rarely, in the *grande*.

Prognostics.

The scum is at first of blackish hue, and extremely thick, but in consequence of being removed it acquires a more yellow colour. When it adheres to the skimmer, and the ebullition is large, dilatory and of dull hue, the alkali is judged insufficient. The quantity of lime is then augmented by degrees, till this indication is no longer furnished.

The juice or *vesou* is poured from the *grande* into the *propre*, where it experiences an ebullition of half an hour, during which time the skimmer is constantly passed over its surface; it is thence emptied into the *flambeau*, where it is skimmed anew. From that cauldron it is passed into the *siróp* where it remains till it gives unequivocal signs of cleanliness, and is then removed to the *batterie*, in which nothing is necessary but to complete the boiling: so that the successive decantation from one cauldron to the other, furnishes signs that the syrup is sufficiently clean to be admitted to the *batterie*.

When, on the contrary, the scum passes easily through the holes of the skimmer, and the ebullition is small, it indicates an excess of alkali, by which the quality of the sugar will be affected. It will neither have the whiteness nor the grain it would otherwise have possessed. This defect is imperfectly remedied by adding fresh and unalkalized juice of the cane, that it may become charged with part of the superabundant alkali. But, the evil can only be palliated; it cannot be completely removed.

It often happens that the canes have not sufficient water to hold them in solution till the scum is completely extracted. When the refiner perceives that the scum continues foul, and that the juice of the cane acquires too rapidly a consistence unfavourable to its developement, he throws more water into the cauldron to prolong the dissolution. The ebullition or bubbles of a middling size, well detached and sparkling, a balsamic odour from the cauldrons termed *flambeau* and *siróp*, are certain signs of the good quality of the sugar, and its good manufacture. When the bubbles in the *batterie* are large, excessively agitated, and make explosions, we must expect sugar of bad quality, which incrustates with difficulty, or not at all. The excessive quantity of water, which the process of the manufacture has not been able to carry off, holds it in a state of liquidity, and condemns it to remain syrup.

Boiling the Sugar.

The talent of boiling sugar well is very highly appreciated in the colonies, as on the just degree of it depends the ultimate fate of the article. If the boiling is too violent, a part of the essential salt burns and diminishes the quantity, and the excessive union (or consolidation) of the particles resists the process of claying; for the molasses which it is necessary to extract, in whitening, forms with the sugar, a substance which the water used in purification cannot penetrate. If the boiling is too feeble, the incrustation of the sugar is imperfect, and the water used in

claying, not finding the necessary resistance, carries off much of the sugar in the form of syrup. Each form of rough sugar weighs, in the French colonies, fifty-four pounds. It is reduced to forty-one or forty-two by the process of claying ; but if the sugar is not sufficiently boiled, and the process of claying is attempted in the same manner as though it had been well boiled, it is reduced to thirty-two or thirty-three pounds. For this reason, when it is intended to sell the sugar in its rough state, it must receive a greater degree of boiling than when it is to be clayed.

The mode of ascertaining the boiling of the sugar is simple and infallible. One of the large copper ladles, used to decant the juice, is plunged into the *batterie*, and immediately withdrawn. By the quantity of the syrup which adheres to the sides of the ladle, the degree of thickness is perceived. When this sign indicates that the point of boiling approaches, the ladle is replunged, and as much of the article taken from the back of it as the thumb can carry :—the index, or fore-finger, is then applied to this portion of the liquid ; at the same time the thumb is dropped and the index elevated. The syrup forms a thread which should break when the fingers are two inches apart, and retire on itself in form of a corkscrew, toward the matter remaining on the thumb. This is called with reason, *the proof*, for there is in fact none better. Physicians have desired to substitute instruments to which they have in vain guaranteed infallibility ; for the results are erroneous, according to the different nature of the cane which produced the sugar. They have finally been compelled

to admit that chance has procured for the colonists a criterion superior to any that art is able to invent. The unexperienced refiner does not at first accommodate himself to this mode of graduating the boiling, because it offends the delicate skin of his fingers; but, as he progresses, the skin hardens, and becomes so callous as to experience no pain. A refiner of the colonies may be easily recognised, merely by inspecting the thumb and finger of his right hand, in like manner as they detect disguised sailors in England, by the callous skin on the palms of their hands.

The feebleness of the boiling is known by the difficulty with which the thread forms; its excess, by the difficulty with which the thread retires, when broken.

As soon as the desired indication is obtained, the fire is checked and the sugar promptly drawn off.—Two negroes, and sometimes three, each having a ladle of ten or twelve feet, empty the sugar, at once, into a cauldron placed under the ground of the sugar-house by the side of the *batterie*.

Crystalization of Sugar.

After half an hour the sugar is stirred in this new cauldron, that it may granulate equally: for this purpose, a wooden spatula, nearly three feet long, called *mouwerker*, is used. The sugar is presently removed from this cauldron to another, larger and more distant from the *equipage*, where it is left till it forms an ice or crust, a line in thickness. This crust shows both the quality of the sugar, and the degree of

boiling. If it is green toward the centre, the sugar is not good: if it is too friable, or brittle, the sugar is too much boiled; if not sufficiently so, the boiling has been too feeble. The just point of boiling has been acquired, when on applying the hand lightly to the crust, it bends and resumes its level. If it breaks too easily, the boiling was in excess; if it does not resume the level, the boiling was deficient.

Putting the Sugar in Moulds or Forms.

While the sugar is in this cauldron, large earthen moulds or forms are placed in the sugar-house, at a distance from the *equipage*, having been kept two or three hours in water and well washed. They are placed beside each other, the point down, the hole at the point being carefully closed with a stopper of straw. As many forms are employed as are supposed sufficient to contain the matter that has been boiled: the sugar is then put in them while still liquid. This operation has also its particular mode. For this purpose, a copper pan with two handles, and of convenient form is employed, called *bec de corbin*. It contains nearly four pots of liquid, and is filled with the article to be transposed. The negro who performs this task, is careful not to empty the *bec de corbin* into one mould; but to distribute it among several, so that they may be filled at the same time. This precaution is necessary, that the liquid part of the sugar may not be contained in some forms, and all the grain in others, but that the distribution may be perfectly equal.

Stirring the Sugar.

After an hour has elapsed, the sugar in the moulds, still in a state of liquefaction, requires another stirring not less essential than the preceding. The object is to remove the grain of the sugar which has adhered through its own weight, to the bottom and sides of the mould; and to divide it equally throughout the mould, precisely at the moment when the cooling of the contents gives to the sugar such consistence as will prevent the grain from precipitating anew. The success to be expected from this operation, depends entirely on the moment in which it is performed. It is called *mouvoir le sucre*, stirring the sugar. If the sugar is too warm, it disturbs the harmony of the formation of the grain, and removes without advantage, that which is deposited at the bottom, and on the sides, to the mould. If it is too cold, it has already become too thick to answer the wish of the refiner.

Practice has furnished a means of seizing the instant, in which the sugar should be stirred. The refiner plunges the spatula to the bottom of the mould, and leaves it to rise alone. According to the rapidity or slowness with which it reascends, he judges that it is too soon or too late. Quickness indicates that it is not yet time; slowness shows that the time is past. A just medium announces the precise moment.

He who performs the operation of stirring, should apply the spatula to the sides, and remove it directly to the middle of the mould. The grain is thus detached from the sides, and distributed throughout the form.

Signs of good manufacture, during the cooling of the Sugar.

The sugar in cooling, forms a crust on the surface, more or less thick, the middle of which presently sinks, leaving a kind of circle adhering to the mould, which resembles a plate with the bottom out. This circle is called *collet*, or collar. It should be about three inches in size, to satisfy the wishes of the refiner. If the circle is narrower, it is a proof that the sugar has not been sufficiently boiled, and the reverse if the circle is large. This crust is called fountain, *fontaine*, because there is a hole in the centre, where there always remains a little syrup, that has not been crystalized : it furnishes also proof with regard to the quantity of alkali employed. If this crust is fat, and the hand on being applied to it comes off with more or less mucilage, it is a proof that the sugar has not received sufficient lime. If, on the contrary, the crust is dry and brittle, lime has been used in excess. The colour of the crust furnishes at once two indications, with respect to the boiling and the alkali. A handsome golden colour announces that the sugar has been well manufactured, and well boiled, a pale yellow, discloses the deficiency of alkali, and of boiling ; dark yellow shows the excess of both.

When the sugar is perfectly cold, the forms, or moulds, are removed from the sugar-house to the place of purification, where they are placed on large earthen pots, with narrow openings, called *canaris*. But, previously, the stopper of straw which closed the opening at the point of the form is not only removed,

but the contents is also pierced with a peg or pin a foot and a half in length, which is immediately withdrawn. This is called piercing the form. The hole thus made must be exactly in the centre, that the water of terrage or claying may filtre equally through all parts of the form, and give it a uniform whiteness. If it is not pierced in the centre, the water proceeds to the vacancy; the side of the form toward which the hole inclines receiving the fluid intended for the whole form: the sugar itself is therefore carried away by the weight of the water, and becomes full of crevices; while the opposite side, deprived of the water it should receive, remains black, without experiencing any advantages from the claying. The same inconveniences occur to the form which has not been placed perfectly perpendicular on the *canari*. The side inclined receives all the water, and that opposite retains its molasses.

Claying the Sugar.

The sugar is left to drain on the *canaris*, during five or six days; after which it undergoes the process of claying (*terrage*). The whole of the fountain, or crust on the surface, is removed. The sugar is well mixed with a kind of trowel, and a layer of sugar already blanched is placed on it, which is united with it as well as can be effected without pressure. The vacancy of about two inches, remaining in the form or mould, is then filled with a paste of black earth, well divided. The water which drains from this earth penetrates throughout the form; and conveys with

it into the *canari* all the molasses to be carried off. When this earth becomes dry, water is poured on it. This is called giving it a refreshment. The sugar generally receives two supplies of earth, and to each two refreshments.

Manner of drying the Sugar.

After the last earth is removed, the sugar is left to drain during twelve days. A fine day is then chosen for exposing it to the sun, from ten until three o'clock. For this purpose it is removed from the form or mould. This is called *locher le sucre*, loosening the sugar. The form is placed on straw, with the small end uppermost; it is then struck with both hands, so gently as not to break the form or bruise the sugar, but with sufficient force to detach it. This generally happens about the third or fourth stroke. The sugar is exposed to the sun, that it may acquire a consistence which will bear handling, without being broken. After three o'clock it is carried to the stove. This is a building of masonry, twenty feet square, more or less, and thirty feet high, without other opening than a small door which closes hermetically, and which opens into the *pugeries*, or place of purification. It bears some resemblance in form to a tower of our country steeples. In one of the exterior sides there is an opening two feet square, even with the ground, to which is adapted, in masonry, a canopy of beaten iron, of which all the cavity is within the stove. In this place the fire and the wood are put, which it is necessary to nourish both day and

night. The smoke escapes by the same avenue, through which the fuel is supplied, in order that it may not penetrate the stove. The heat is kept up to the fortieth or fiftieth degree of Reaumur's thermometer. In the interior three or four stages of boards, arranged in the form of a grate or lattice are prepared, on which the sugar is placed. Twelve or fifteen days are sufficient to give it a solidity which it will retain two or three years, provided it is preserved from water and excessive humidity.

When the sugar is removed from the stove, it is broken or pounded, put up in hogsheads, and delivered in commerce.

Boiling the Syrup.

The syrup which drains from the forms into the *canaris*, undergoes a new action of fire, and furnishes sugar, more porous than the former, but almost equally merchantable; and it passes through the same process of claying. From the syrup which again results, another sugar of inferior quality is produced: finally, the last syrup is sold to distillers for the purpose of making rum.

Proceedings of the Spanish Refiners.

It is very necessary that the Spaniards of the eastern parts of Terra-Firma should pursue the same order as the French, in the operations relative to sugar. Ashes form the greatest part of the alkali they employ. Hence it comes, that, notwithstanding the rich-

ness of soil, their sugar never equals that of the French colonies, either in crystalization or whiteness. Their manner of claying is equally exceptionable. The earth, not being well divided, does not compel the water to filter through with sufficient slowness; but allows it on the contrary, to escape so rapidly, that it carries off in its course much of the sugar, which falls with the syrup. This prejudice is the more remarkable, as I do not know one individual who boils again, even the grosser or first syrup. Their places of purification, far from presenting, like those of the French, the agreeable aspect of a parterre well kept, resemble receptacles of filth, in which one cannot enter without being mired in the syrup. They do not use *canaris*, but place the forms of sugar, destined for blanching, on a kind of plank elevated four feet. Each line of forms discharges the syrup into a canal of wood, which conducts it to a basin in which all the canals empty. It has been observed to me, that this saves the expense of *canaris*, and of transporting the syrup to the general reservoir, but I insist, that by this proceeding they lose more in syrup than the price of the *canaris*. Besides, the cleanliness of a building, where the eye may contemplate the products of the culture, without the pleasure being disturbed by the disgusting sight of the filth from the syrup, should certainly be taken into calculation.

Their mode of drying the sugar also, is far from presenting the same advantages as ours. They spread the sugar upon an elevated platform, covered by a grooved roof. In fair weather they shove aside the roof, and the sugar receives the drying rays of the sun. Excepting at such times, the roof is not re-

moved, and the sugar has time to regain during the rains, or from the dampness of the nights, that humidity which a few hours of the sun had imbibed.— These transitions from dry to damp and from damp to dry, cannot but destroy the grain of the sugar, and prevent it from acquiring the consistence necessary to render it durable.

In general, the fabrication of sugar at Terra-Firma, and, above all, the claying, are, and will naturally be a long time behind hand, because interest dictates to sell as sugar, a mass composed of all the molasses, and of eight-tenths of the mucilage, which experience has taught us to place in the rank of heterogeneous particles. This substance is divided in small loaves of sugar, to which, as I have already said, they give the name of *papelons*. They generally weigh three pounds, and are worth a real, whilst a pound of white sugar is worth a real and a half. The poor, who subsist principally on *papelon*, procure this precious necessary at a small expense, and habit causes them to prefer it to clayed sugar, which costs more than four times as much.

For the fabrication of the *guarapo*, of which I have spoken at the commencement of this article, the *papelon* is much the best, because it contains the principles of fermentation in a superior degree to the clayed sugar.

As to the little consistence which the sugar can acquire by the means which they employ, it is almost unimportant since the sugar is destined to be consumed on the spot as fast as manufactured; and not like the sugar of our colonies, to be transported across the sea, deposited in magazines in the mother coun-

try, and perhaps afterwards to be sent to the north of Europe. It would therefore be useless, perhaps injurious to the interests of the planter of Terra-Firma, to deprive the sugar of a humidity, which augments its weight, and increases its proceeds.

It would not be surprising, however, if the manufacture of sugar should shortly undergo an advantageous reform in these provinces. The valuable work of M. Dutrone, on the history of the cane, and on the means of obtaining sugar in a greater quantity and of superior quality than by the ordinary process, is in the hands of several planters, who admire the principles it unfolds, and are only prevented from applying them, by the difficulty of procuring the requisite utensils.

Tobacco.

A sixth article of produce in Terra-Firma, is tobacco. Its cultivation was at first free. Its commerce knew no other tie, no other shackle, no other enemy or oppressor, than the company of Guipuscoa. The culture of this plant, which the soil principally favoured, and which might be prosecuted on a large or small scale, and without costly utensils or expensive machines, was adapted, in every respect, to a people scattered, who had no other means of existing excepting by labour and perseverance.

Cultivated on the King's Account.

But the time arrived when the necessities of the state, and the expenses of the government of the pro-

vinces dependent on Caraccas, obliged the king to draw from tobacco, the same fiscal resources which he had derived from it, for a long time in the kingdoms of Mexico, Peru, and Santa-Fe. A cedula of June 22, 1777, reserved the exclusive vent of tobacco there, unless the planters preferred to redeem themselves therefrom, either by a poll-tax or by any other, of which the result would assure the king of an equivalent of 12 dollars per quintal. This occasions great disputes between the planters and the intendant; but as they relate entirely to finances, I reserve the details of them for the chapters destined for that subject, and in this will confine myself solely to the cultivation of tobacco.

The cedula which I have just cited, was executed in 1779. It severely prohibited all persons from sowing tobacco, and chose the places which were considered the most suitable in the different provinces, for cultivating and preparing tobacco on the king's account. Tatapa and Goaruto, in the valleys of Aragoa; Orituco, to the east of Calabozo; Varinas and Grita, at the south-west extremity of Venezuela; Cumana-coa and Tipure, in the province of Cumana; and Uspate, at Guiana, gained the preference.

In each of these places administrations were established, all subject to a director general of tobacco residing at Caraccas, with a salary of 4000 dollars. The first who occupied this employ, was Don Estevan de Leon. He obtained, in 1793, the office of intendant; under the obligation which he imposed upon himself, of discharging *gratis* the functions of director of tobacco. In the month of January, 1803, he

he was superseded by Don Dionisio Franco, one of the subjects of Spain, who best knew the interests of his country.

The persons employed in these administrations distribute allotments of the land destined to the culture of tobacco, to such as apply therefor. The quantity is proportioned to the abilities of the grantee, and to the number of cultivators which he engages to employ. They even make him cautious advances of money, which they deduct from the amount of the first tobacco which he delivers to the king. He is enjoined to sow all the land given him, with tobacco, and forbidden to employ it in any other species of cultivation. He must deliver to the king all the tobacco which he raises, without retaining a single leaf, and he is paid according to its quality. The culture and preparation of tobacco does not require fatiguing labour, but great care: the least negligence in the weeding and other proceedings which will be detailed, occasions the loss of the crop.

Nurseries of Tobacco.

Tobacco requires a fat and humid soil. Orituco has sand mingled with the mould, and produces the best tobacco. It would reproduce itself from its seed; but, in the plantations of the king, they establish nurseries which demand a rich soil where the water does not settle and stagnate; for the seeds would rot instead of sprouting.

The time chosen for sowing, is from the month of August until in November. The first care is to pre-

vent, by good inclosures, animals from entering the nurseries. After having finished sowing, they water the earth, and this operation is repeated as often as the want of rain renders it necessary. The herbs which spring up at the same time with the tobacco are very injurious to it; they are pulled up by hand, taking care not to affect the young plant. It is often necessary to sow all the land a second time; but they are always obliged to scatter new seed in the parts where the plant has made its appearance. It is very rare that the first sowing does not leave large spaces unproductive. At the end of forty or fifty days the tobacco is to be transplanted.

Planting.

In the mean time the land destined to be planted, is prepared. It is broken in a sufficient degree that the rains may easily dissolve the salts, provoke fermentation, and make the tobacco shoot forth handsome sprigs and long roots. When the moment of planting is arrived, the young plant is taken up with all possible caution, particularly guarding it in its transportation against the ardour of the sun, and against being bruised. If the weather is dry, it is adviseable to water the nursery the evening before, that the young plants may be more cool and fresh when taken up, and more disposed for the new germination.

The tobacco is planted in lines, three feet and a half distant from each other. The holes are made at two feet distant in high ground, and at one and a half in the plains. They should be made two days before

the planting ; because, in this interval, all injurious particles have time to exhale, and the rain deposits the moisture necessary to fertilization.

The plant should be placed in the hole with great precaution. Care should be taken, not only against damaging its tender roots, but also, that the soil which clings to them should also be detached in taking up. All hard clods of earth which might injure the young plant, are removed, and the hole is closed up in such a manner as to prevent the water from settling there. Without this attention the tobacco plant would perish.

It is adviseable to cover the plant with a banana leaf, or something similar ; by this means the tobacco is protected from the heat of the sun, and from the heavy rains, which would not prove less prejudicial. Four days afterwards it is uncovered to replace such plants as through the fault of the planter, or any other cause, may not have taken root. The planting may take place at any time of day, provided the weather is overcast, otherwise it should only be done in the morning or evening.

Weeding.

After all these precautions, the plantation must be weeded as often as the quantity of herbs renders it necessary. Nothing tends more to the thriving of the tobacco than to keep it clean and unembarrassed.—As soon as the young plant has acquired a certain size and substance, it seeks to free itself from its first leaves, which themselves announce, by their wither-

ing, that they are injurious to the plant. Nature demands in this case, to be assisted by the hand of the cultivator.

Tobacco Vermin.

From its most tender age the tobacco is attacked by several species of worms. It would inevitably perish, if man did not defend it against its destroyers. As each of these worms makes its ravages in a different manner, the first measure to prevent them, is to study well their characters and movements. The drooping of the plant intimates that it is attacked by the worms called *canne*. They lodge themselves in the summit of the stem, and are found on opening the leaves thereof. All that part of the stem damaged by the worms, is cut away close to the healthy part. It then puts forth a new bud, which, with care, forms a passable tobacco plant.

The *rosca* worm makes it attacks only in the night. In the day it hides itself in the ground. A bed of prickles placed about the tobacco plant, is the best trap that can be set for them.

It is believed that the insect to which the people of the country give the name of *punaïse volante*, injures the tobacco by a kind of corrosive transpiration, which it deposits on the plant. The tobacco is seen to decay insensibly, and does not revive, until relieved from its enemy.

There is a species of butterfly, called, by the Spaniards of the country, *palometa*, which makes great

havoc in the tobacco. It escapes with activity during the heat of the day, but the dampness of the morning benumbs it, and it is easily killed.

The grub (*puceron*) is almost imperceptible; it perforates the bud, and destroys the plant.

A species of scarab, called, in the country, *arador*, enters the ground, and feeds on the roots of the tobacco, which it occasions speedily to perish.

But there is no insect from which the tobacco has so much to apprehend as the horned worm (*ver a corne*). It requires but one night to devour a leaf of tobacco, whatever may be its size.

The catalogue of worms destructive to tobacco might be considerably augmented; but I believe I have mentioned sufficient to give an idea of the vigilance which this plant exacts from the cultivator.

Increase of the Tobacco Plant.

The plant soon springs up and forms on the summit a bud, towards which the sap would direct itself if a remedy was not applied. The means employed with success, is to cut off the bud. The plant is then one foot and a half in height. This operation is repeated when it has attained three feet. There are some who repeat it three times, but this is rare. At the same time they cut all the sprouts and all the branches which draw off the nutritive substance of the leaves. Experience has proved that the branches or sprouts which shoot from the stem, render the tobacco bitter and retard its harvest.

Signs of its Maturity.

In consequence of these operations the tobacco becomes bushy, and acquires by degrees, a colour between blue and green, a sign of the approach of its maturity. It is known to be ripe by a small bluish spot which forms itself at the point where the leaf joins to the stem; this commonly takes place in December.

All the leaves do not ripen at the same time, because the sap is not equally distributed throughout the plant. Those leaves only are gathered of which the colour indicates their maturity. The others have not yet the essential juice, and would only yield tobacco without flavour. The gathering is continued and repeated as the leaves ripen.

Precautions in gathering.

It is highly important to the quality of tobacco, that it should not be gathered except when the sun is in full force above the horizon; for the dews or any other humidity would injure, by fermentation, its constituent principles, and would render ineffective the benefits which it had already received from nature, and those which it might expect from a methodical preparation.

According as the ripe leaves are gathered they are placed in heaps from twenty to twenty-five, between the ranges of the plants. The labourers collect them, arrange them on mats, cover them to protect them

from the sun, and in this manner transport them to the manufactory.

The Spaniards of Terra-Firma give their tobacco two kinds of preparation, one they term *cura seca*, or the dry preparation; the other *cura negra*, or black preparation. The only difference consists in the degree of fermentation given to the tobacco, submitted to the process of the black preparation. Its object is to obtain therefrom a juice highly esteemed in the country. This operation blackens the tobacco. It is this which gives the name of black to this mode of curing.

Dry Preparation, or Cura Seca.

As soon as the tobacco arrives from the fields to the houses assigned for its preparation, it is divided into small parcels, which are placed in the shade until the next day.

At the end of twenty-four hours they hang under sheds and on bars, the leaves of tobacco, two and two, if in winter, or four and four if in summer. This is done to make the tobacco lose, by the action of the air, its tension and green colour, to acquire instead a yellowness and softness which render it more flexible. In rainy weather it must remain three days in this situation, and sometimes four; but if the weather is dry, two days are sufficient.

As soon as the tobacco has obtained the colour and softness of which I have spoken, it is taken down without being piled up, lest it should ferment; they then take out the stalk, from the point, until within

four inches of the part where the leaf was united to the stem. This is done with the fingers, and with the caution necessary to prevent the leaf from being damaged. The leaves which have undergone this process are laid on one side, and the damaged tobacco and the stalks on the other, without putting them in heaps, because there is still danger of their heating or fermenting.

At the same time they make cords or twists of these leaves, which they divide into balls of seventy-five pounds, which, after the process of preparation, diminish into twenty-five pounds. All this requires great celerity, because the leaves may dry, and consequently it would be more difficult to take out the stalk and to twist them. Thus, therefore, if the operation is retarded or delayed, it will be fortunate if the tobacco turns out even of the second quality.

The interior of the cord is made, like segars, of broken or damaged leaves, which are covered with a good leaf. As soon as the ball is of the proper size, it is made anew, so that the outward end becomes the centre of the new ball. This is done to prevent it from untwisting.

The balls of tobacco are then placed on beds or layers of a foot thick, formed of the branches or stalks, covered with the damaged tobacco. A covering of the branches is likewise spread over the balls, and kept down by weights or skins. All this should be done in the shade and under sheds; for it is necessary to guard against the sun and the rain.

The tobacco is suffered to ferment for forty-eight hours, if it was too dry when the large stalk was taken

out ; but only twenty hours if it was at its proper point ; it is afterwards rolled anew, so that what was on the exterior becomes the centre ; and at the same time it is highly moistened to prevent fermentation. The balls are then returned to their former place to ferment, and in this state they are left for twenty-four hours, if the first time they were suffered to ferment forty-eight, and *vice versa*.

When it is judged that the balls of tobacco have sufficiently fermented, they are exposed to the air, until they become cold ; they are wound over morning and evening for three or four days. By this process, more or less repeated, the visible defects of the tobacco are corrected. It is entirely exempt from them if its colour is blackish, its juice viscid, and its smell agreeable.

Lastly, the balls are unrolled, and the tobacco put in *manoques** which are suspended in the shade and separated, that the tobacco may lose its superfluous humidity, and acquire that colour which influences its value in commerce. If the weather is too damp, it is necessary to light a fire beneath the suspended tobacco, or to place there such materials as will yield a thick smoke.

It is difficult to assign the exact period of time, which the tobacco should remain in this state. That depends on the temperature, on the greater or less proportion of fat particles which it contains, and on the nature of the precautions observed in its preparation. It is known by opening the cord and squeezing it. If the juice run freely, the tobacco

* *Manoque de tabac*, a long roll of tobacco.

is not sufficiently dry, but it generally dries in forty or fifty days.

In some manufactories they put the tobacco at first in manoques and suspend them in the air.— When they judge that it is sufficiently dry, they bring the manoques together, so that by the contact, which endures for several hours, the juice of the plant concentrates. All superfluous humidity being dissipated, they profit of such time of the morning, or of a cloudy day, when the cord is most flexible, to tie the manoque to four points at equal distances. This is done with strips of the bark of the banana so as not to break the tobacco. They then place the manoques in heaps which they arrange on a bed of dry banana leaves of the height of nearly two feet. They cover the heap with the same banana leaves on which they place weights which press down the mass.

At the end of eight days they uncover it, to inspect the state of the fermentation ; if it is too considerable, they suspend the manoques anew in a place sheltered, but airy, where they remain until the fault of excessive fermentation is visibly corrected. If the fermentation is at the point desired, they form a new heap in an inverted order, and with the same precautions. Fifteen days afterwards they examine the fermentation to invert the heap once more ; it remains in this new state fifteen days, as in the preceding instances.

The humidity of the atmosphere occasions sometimes an interruption to the order of these operations, or requires that much greater attention should be shown to the process of the fermentation, in order

to preserve the tobacco from corruption. Each time that the heap is made over, care should be had that the cord does not slacken, nor the manoques open.

All the operations being finished, the heap is made anew for the last time. The manoques are detached, the cords of tobacco extended at full length in a magazine slightly watered, the ground of which is covered with fresh banana leaves, which are likewise sprinkled, or which have been rendered humid by the dew. The first layer of tobacco being made, it is covered with similar leaves, and new layers are successively formed, until the whole of the tobacco is thus heaped up. Then a strong layer of banana leaves is spread above, which is kept down by weights, and sometimes a little water is added, if there is any apprehension that the tobacco is too dry.

It remains in this situation four days. The manufacturer then untwists the cord and ascertains the quality of the tobacco. He separates the pieces of an inferior quality, and makes them into balls of twenty-five pounds. The tobacco of the first quality receives the same form; and both the one and the other are placed in magazines.

Preparation of Black Tobacco, or Cura Negra.

All the measures which I have just mentioned, have for their object, merely the preparation of tobacco *cura seca*. Those which are employed for the *cura negra* differ in some few particulars. The first fermentation of the tobacco, when in balls, is made in the sun,

under a layer of green herbage, which is charged with weights to augment the compression. After three days the covering is removed, and a thick vapour is emitted. The balls are returned after being wound over, and they undergo a second, third and fourth fermentation, until the colour of the tobacco evinces that it should be placed in the shade. When this is done, the balls are made anew, and a weight is placed on each of them, which presses therefrom a liquor, which is received in appropriate vessels.—The balls are once more wound outside in, and submitted to the same process, and they emit the same liquid, known in the country by the name of *moo* and *chimoo*.

The rest of the preparation of this tobacco, is nearly the same as that of the dry tobacco, which has already been described.

The liquid which is expressed from the tobacco is not suffered to remain in that state. It is boiled to the consistence of a syrup. It becomes, by this means, an object of great consumption among the planters of the interior of Terra-Firma, principally in the part of Varinas. The women have a small box, which they wear like a watch, suspended to one side, at the end of a string. Instead of a key, it is furnished with a little spoon, with which they help themselves from time to time of this juice, relishing it in their mouths like a sweetmeat. This corresponds to the chewing of tobacco among our sailors.

Mode in which the King pays Tobacco to the Cultivators.

The tobacco is paid by the king to those who undertake its cultivation, according to its quality. The tobacco is first divided into *cura seca* and *cura negra*, and each of those two species are sub-divided into three qualities, of which the prices are very different. In the manner of classing them great abuses and injustice have taken place, which the law has never been able to prevent. The wise, but ineffectual regulation, which prescribed the forms to be observed in the delivery, reception, weight and qualities of tobacco, is of the 2d of June, 1787.

According to this regulation, it should all be done in the presence of the factor, the book-keeper, the administrator of the magazines, the visitor or inspector, the cultivator and the commissary general of the plantations.

The inspector classes the tobacco, and he must not be impeded or interrupted in the discharge of his duty. If the cultivator is not content, he appeals to the assistants, who cannot change any thing, unless unanimously. If they are divided in opinion, they nominate persons experienced in the business to decide.

Notwithstanding that the tobacco may not have all the qualities requisite to preserve it for a length of time, yet it must be received according to its state and value, provided its corruption may be retarded five or six months.

The tobacco is weighed in the presence of the members of this assembly, and the steelyard is held

by one of the guards nominated by the administration. Two invoices are made of it, signed by all the assistants. One of them remains at the factory, and the other is consigned to the commissary general of the plantations.

After all these formalities, the cultivator of the tobacco is paid at the following rates :

For a quintal of tobacco, cura negra.

First quality,	11 Dollars.
Second quality,	10
Third quality,	7

For the cura seca.

First quality,	10 Dollars.
Second quality,	8
Third quality,	3

Reflections on the Cultivation of Terra-Firma.

It is a matter of astonishment that, in the most beautiful country in nature, where every thing concurs to promote luxuriance of vegetation, the plantations should be so inconsiderable in magnitude.—A planter whose income amounts to four or five thousand dollars, is considered rich. There cannot be enumerated twenty plantations in all the province of Caraccas, which produce a greater revenue. It is not, however, that the property is too much divided. It is rare to see a plantation, of which one tenth part of its extent is cultivated. It is a cheerless and painful sight, to behold the labour of three successive centuries crowned with such pitiful results. On a soil two hundred times less spacious, incomparably less watered and less fertile, and with not more than

one half the white population, the French have succeeded in raising at St. Domingo, ten times more produce than is raised at this day in the vast provinces of Caraccas.

First Cause of its Decline.

What are the causes which have produced such striking effects ? The first that presents is, the mass of mortgages with which every estate in Terra-Firma is more or less burthened. There are so few houses, plantations, &c. which are not oppressed by the *censos*, or obligations to pay interest on the capitals mortgaged on them, that their scanty number is too inconsiderable to constitute an exception.

It is the custom of the Spaniards not to alienate any property. They may be poor, but they must appear rich. If they are in want of money, they will borrow it on their fast property, and agree to pay five per cent interest. These kinds of loans are the more easy, because the want of stir in commercial affairs, leaves money at a low rate there. The best real property, will scarcely yield four or five per cent : five per cent, therefore, on his money, is a clear gain to the lender ; it is natural, then, that he who has funds, is equally eager to lend, as he who is in want is to borrow.

Second Cause.

The pious legacies and the prebends, which augment from generation to generation, instead of being

extinguished by payment of the capitals, oblige the planter to pay regular interest, and consequently deprive him of the means of increasing his productions. It would be a thousand times more advantageous for the public prosperity, if all the pious donations were discharged in toto, even though it were expedient to sell all, or part, of the fast property, rather than suffer them to accumulate on the possessions, the annual interests of which consume their revenues, and paralyse the industry of the most active proprietor.

The income tax of five per. cent paid to the king for the duty of the alcavala, and the tythes, are not by any means as detrimental to the progress of cultivation, as the mortgages, because they are only levied on the proceeds, and are proportioned to their progression; whereas the interests of the mortgages are always the same, whether the year is abundant or sterile.

Adverse seasons which destroy two or three crops successively, ruins forever a planter who is burthened with mortgages, however laborious he may be. The expenses augment continually the magnitude of the debt; chagrin overcomes all his industrious inclinations; his property is sequestrated, and passes, under the form of a sale, and at the same charges, to another planter, who is menaced with the same fate. Thus, all conspire against the increase of cultures, because they offer no benefits eventually, excepting to advocates and attornies.

Third Cause.

Another obstacle to cultivation, greater if possible than those just mentioned, presents itself in the manner in which the Spaniards regulate their plantations. Their principal and habitual residence is in the cities. Every proprietor has his house and residence there. The furnishing of it, number of domestics, and expenses, are regulated according to the revenue of the plantation, which is generally calculated on the proceeds of the most fertile and prosperous year. It is consequently rare that the expenditures do not exceed the receipts, and that in place of economising, for the sake of improving the cultivation, they involve themselves in debt, and accuse the intemperateness of the seasons, and the imperfection of the laws, rather than their own want of order and discretion.

The Spaniard who visits his plantation once a year, thinks he has done a vast deal towards making his fortune, and he often takes no notice of the labours going on there. I recollect my demanding one day of a Spanish doctor, who returned from residing two months on his sugar plantation, if the weather was favourable to vegetation; if the sugar made a good appearance, in a word, if all answered his wishes.—He answered with a disdainful smile, that all these details were under the jurisdiction of his overseer; and those who were present immediately took up the subject, to assure me seriously, that the doctor went to his plantation only for his pleasure, and not for his interest; to enjoy the purity of the air, and not

to overlook the management of his property. It cost me a prompt and serious apology. I remained confused, to have offended a Spanish planter with questions which would have flattered a French planter of the highest order. A country where more honour is not paid to agriculture, is unworthy of the favours of nature.

Fourth Cause.

The management of plantations in Terra-Firma, is confided to negroes, mulattos, and sometimes to whites of the Canaries ; but never to creoles, who prefer the indolence of the cloisters, the attractions of the epaulette, or the labyrinth of chicanery, to the noble labours of the country. Employments are the great and sole objects of ambition to the Spanish American. Whatever riches may be insured to him by the best soil in the world, yet he still rests short of his desires, unless he has a military grade, a place in the finances, a judiciary office, or the cross of an order. He wastes his life and lavishes his fortune in obtaining grades and employs, and in soliciting new ones.—Every Spaniard *honorado*, who is above the commonalty, has his empowered agent at Madrid. He is ever ready, at the order of his constituent, to collect, at the offices, all necessary information ; and according to circumstances, he acts without waiting for the orders of his client, and solicits such place or appointment as he thinks will be suitable for him. The solicitor, however, does not take a single step, nor speak a single word, unless the money, already de-

posited at Madrid, pays him well for his labours, and often even for those which he has not taken.— There is not a Spaniard, moreover, who does not consider a remittance of money to Madrid, as a preliminary condition of the success of every solicitation. There are daily, instances of planters who mortgage their plantations for the purpose of effecting these remittances, and who thus dry up the source of their landed riches, to succeed in that which springs from favour. It is difficult for men, thus thirsting after prerogatives, to deliver themselves entirely to the study of productive nature ; to renounce the ambition of those distinctions, after which all their countrymen are sighing, and to content themselves with the simple title of cultivator, to which nobody attaches any consideration.

A strong proof that all men have a common stamp, is, that we had planters in our colonies, who equalled the Spaniards in their mania for distinctions. But it is equally true, that the plantation always resented the vanity of its owner, and the contempt which he evinced for it.

By the character of the overseers employed, we may judge of the multiplied defects in the management of a plantation. Neither emulation nor intelligence are esteemed in these administrations. To obtain passable productions, it is necessary that the fertility of soil should atone for the evils of the ignorance, which presides over their culture and preparation.—With a similar system, our colonies would not furnish the tenth part of what they at present produce.

If any one would wish a proof of the advantages resulting to produce, from the residence of planters on their property, let him cast his eyes on the plantations which prosper, on those which remain unchanged, and on those which fall into decay ; he will find that the first are conducted by proprietors, whose whole ambition is to increase their revenues, and who pride themselves on being cultivators ; the greater part of these men are Biscayans. The second appertain to Spaniards, who divide their time between the city and the country, and who superintend the labours while they are on their property, and direct such as must be performed during their absence. The plantations which decline, belong invariably to persons who only visit them as strangers, who disdain the information necessary to a planter, who seek after favours and employs, or who are dissipated and extravagant.

Fifth Cause.

The fifth and last cause of the decline of culture, and which has contributed most to diminish, in an alarming manner, the productions of Terra-Firma is, the fault of not introducing negroes. The Spaniards, as I have observed in Chap. III. Article *Slaves*, have never been allowed their direct importation. They were permitted to purchase them in the Antilles, to pay for them in the produce of the country, excepting in cacao, and to resell them at Terra-Firma: the law even afforded particular favours to this branch of commerce.

The revolt of the blacks of the French colonies took place in 1791; all were on the brink of being lost. St. Domingo, the richest and most brilliant of all the colonies of the world, became the theatre of carnage and devastation. All the disorganizing elements seemed to dispute the glory of hastening its entire destruction. The slave no longer beheld in the master but a victim, and the master no longer found in the slave but an executioner. Flames annihilated the possessions, while the Africans, or the descendants of Africans, bathed themselves in the blood of every one who had the appearance of white. A spectacle so terrible, was naturally a cause of affright to Terra-Firma. They considered it as dangerous to public tranquillity, to augment the number of blacks; and besides, the war rendered the importation of them more difficult. No one purchased any more of them, either in the Antilles or at Terra-Firma. Twelve years elapsed, without the arrival of a single negro.

In the mean time, agriculture demanded hands, the labours of the country languished, the mass of productions diminished; but prudence demanded precautions. The intendant, Juan Vicente de Arce, conciliated these extremes, in forbidding, by his decree of May 12, 1803, the introduction of negroes, coming from strange colonies; which was the more prudent because, leaving this commerce, which had become more critical, in the hands of strangers, avarice might excite them to buy in the French colonies, negro prisoners who would carry to Terra-Firma the seeds of revolt. The intendant, for the

furnishing of the provinces, left only the execution of a permission, given by the king to Edward Barry and company, for the introduction of four thousand negroes ; but the grantee being dead, the operation was arrested, and only particular permissions were given. Two merchants, in May, 1804, obtained two of these permissions, each amounting to fifteen hundred negroes. In this manner the introducers of blacks are known, and can be made answerable for any irregularity in their mode of proceeding.

But this measure is still very insufficient for a country where there is not the twentieth part of the population necessary for its cultivation ; for a country where the births of slaves are far from supplying the vacancies made by their deaths ; where the benevolence and piety of the masters annually draw a considerable number of individuals from the class of slaves, to render them free, who thenceforward become useless to agriculture and a charge to society.

It appears impossible to remove these evils, which menace this country with a slow but infallible dissolution, except by facilitating the introduction of blacks. But circumstances make it necessary that this measure should not be adopted but with the greatest precautions.

This object has become a point of political economy, capable of fixing all the attention of the legislator, and all the vigilance of the government. To refuse the reception of negroes, would appear absurd, until the number of slaves equalled that of the free population, and not to deliver the local regulation of

blacks to a severe and guardian police, would be to jeopardize the public tranquillity.

Reason, humanity and policy permit the employment, for the safety of these provinces, of another measure, which is wanting in all the other European possessions in the gulph of Mexico ; it is that of employing in agriculture the idle hands of free men of colour, and of the Indians of *doctrinaries* and missions. The Canaries, the youth of which, have a decided taste for America, might also furnish Terra-Firma with useful and laborious men. It rests with the wise combination of the laws, and with the zeal of the magistrates, to proceed on this measure, and to devote themselves seriously to the grand work of leading the provinces to that degree of prosperity for which they were designed by nature. The salaries of workmen should be punctually paid, their emulation excited and activity should succeed to idleness.

Means of encouraging Agriculture.

It would be unjust to deny that the laws might be more advantageous to agriculture than they have been, and than they are. I will remark, as their first defect, that they do not give public respectability to the cultivator ; they do not render agriculture the most honourable and most favoured occupation.

The talent of a legislator consists in directing for the public good, the opinions, prejudices, and even passions of the citizen : as therefore the Spaniards have in general, a religious respect for every thing that is in representation, it appears to me that agriculture

would derive much benefit from this national bias, if a chamber of agriculture were established in the chief city of each government ; the number of members being in proportion to the population of the province.

Every thing relative to agriculture might be referred to this chamber, which should hold its sessions twice a week. It should be incessantly occupied in expedients to simplify labour, by the use of suitable machines, to put all the idle hands of the country in employ, to perfect the manufacture and preparation of produce, &c. This chamber might be invested with power to decide, without delay or expense, all disputes relative to the watering of lands, the damages committed by animals on neighbouring plantations, the payment of wages to workmen, the bad treatment of slaves, &c.

All these causes, though summary by nature, pass at present through the circuitous and ruinous windings of judicial formalities, and obtain that solemnity of attention to which the most complicated cases have, among other nations an exclusive right. Will it be credited, that if the cognizance of these affairs were taken from the royal audience of Caraccas, its roll of causes would be reduced more than half?—This alone proves the advantage that would result to public prosperity from this reform. It would at one blow restore to agriculture a moiety of the immense sums at present divided, under denomination of expenses, among notaries, advocates, attornies, &c.

If the utility of establishing chambers of agriculture is admitted, justice and good policy require

that the gratuitous service exacted from them, should be rewarded with prerogative, honours, and precedence.

The first members should be nominated by the governor, and his choice should be regulated by the morals, intelligence, and love of labour in the individual. Half of the chamber should be changed every year, in such manner that, after the first year, every member should continue two years in office. The moiety departing should be replaced by ballot of the whole chamber, from a list of candidates, at the head of which those cultivators should be placed, who during the course of the year had made useful discoveries, or presented memoirs of merit, on the art of cultivating or preparing produce. The members whose times expired, should not be eligible to re-election during two years ; for it is necessary to prevent this chamber from becoming the exclusive appendage of a small circle of men. The noble, the white plebeian, the military man, the lawyer and the priest, should be equally eligible. Nothing should exclude but colour and the want of possessions, cultivated in commercial produce. Every election to be submitted to the approbation of the governor.

The quality of a member of the chamber of agriculture, should be taken in all public and private acts, as an honourable title, to which should be attached the qualification of *seigneurie**.

The members, after the expiration of their office, should retain, during life, the title of ex-member of the chamber of agriculture ; but the title of *seigneurie*

* Equivalent to the title of his honour, his worship, &c.

should be limited to the time of holding the station. They should have, during life, a right of sitting in the chamber.

In public ceremonies, the chamber of agriculture should take rank next to the audience. A particular and ornamented station should be reserved for them in the principal church. It should be exclusively occupied by them; and the members might take their seats in it, either individually or in a body.

On the days of compliment, *besumanas*, the chamber of agriculture should be first admitted to compliment the governor, in cities containing neither an audience nor a bishop; and the governor immediately after receiving the compliment of the chamber, should send two deputies to return the courtesy.

The secretary should hold his office for life, and with appointments for an honourable maintenance. In large cities, it could not be less than 3000 dollars. But the establishment of chambers of agriculture could not accomplish the great object proposed, if they did not possess the means of disseminating information by correspondence, by memoirs submitted to their judgment, and by the publication of experiments advantageous to agriculture. For this purpose, a printing-press is requisite. By that alone, can a general system, founded on good principles, be prepared from the various methods employed to obtain commercial produce. In the present state of things, no planter profits by the experience of his neighbour, or communicates his own. On the contrary, a selfish principle induces each to conceal from all others, any discovery that chance has disclosed

to him. He seeks the profit of it alone, because he would derive no credit from divulging his secret. But, then, in detailing it to the chamber of agriculture, he would receive the flattering compliment of public thanks, so gratifying to the pride of every man. The ensuing publication, by the chamber, announcing the discovery, and naming the author, would become an honourable monument, which would render dear to succeeding generations the memory of him, who had the happiness of being useful to his fellow-citizens.

This is a suitable moment to speak of the difficulties which have been experienced in attempts to establish a printing-press at Caraccas. The consulate, convinced of the great advantages offered by typography to cultivation and commerce, requested permission from the king, to establish a printer at Caraccas, under the same regulations and superintendance with those of Havanna, Santa-Fe, Lima, Mexico, &c. An absolute refusal was returned in 1803. The Spanish government apprehended that the insurrection of 1797, was not perfectly extinguished, and that the seditious, availing themselves of the facility to print their projects, might thus give a bias to public opinion, fatal to the Spanish sovereignty.

My residence in the capital of Venezuela, has enabled me to ascertain sufficiently the disposition of the people, to be convinced that these fears are chimerical and injurious to the inhabitants of that great city.

While there are lucrative posts in the different branches of administration, civil, military and reli-

gious; and while the nomination of all these employs rests with the king, it will require efforts, far superior to those of Spanish energy, to endanger the royal authority in the slightest degree. Every Spaniard is solicitous of office. He whose wealth does not require the addition of official revenue, is ambitious of honours, crosses, and Castilian titles, such as marquis, count, baron; and it is from the king alone that he can hope for these gratifications. Assuredly, a press at Caraccas, whatever license might be given to it, would be far from having the ability of affecting this state of affairs. What danger then could possibly result, when it would be subjected to inspection and censure? Those who create phantoms have always terrifying objects before them. In seeing evil on every side, it is impossible ever to act correctly. Prudence, it is true, enjoins precaution, but excessive precaution is only dictated by pusillanimity, or by that terror which banishes reason. Charles VII. through apprehension of poison, abstained from eating. He incurred death through the fear of dying.

Besides the great objects of utility already described, a printing-press, at Caraccas, would offer others not less important. A weekly gazette might be filled with all sorts of advertisements, which would supply the want of communication between the citizens. It often happens that one neighbour is desirous to sell effects, which another is solicitous to purchase; but, through want of the requisite knowledge, both are deprived of the opportunity. A merchant has frequently articles in his store, which are wanted in the city, or which he can sell below the ordinary price;

but the circumstance is not known, and the articles remain unsold. A proprietor wishes to sell, hire, or farm out his plantation, his house, his slaves—years pass away without his finding an opportunity, because his intention is unknown. By means of a periodical paper, every person would know all that was important for his convenience in the province, and could make known whatever he might offer to that of others.

Government for all its measures; the royal audience for its regulations; the archbishop for his mandates; the university for its acts; the college for its notices; the intendant for his arrangements; the consulate for commerce; even religion, for its exercises and prayers, would find, in the printing-house, means of multiplying, promptly and at little expense, copies of every thing destined to publicity. It seems therefore, impossible that such an establishment should experience still new obstacles.

CHAPTER VIII.

Commercial System of Spain with regard to its Colonies, and Commerce of the Eastern Part of Terra-Firma.

First commercial relations between Spain and her colonies—Establishment of the French in America, and their colonial system—Causes which prevented Spain from pursuing the same system—First relations of Venezuela with Spain—Interloping commerce of Holland—Fruitless attempts of the Spanish commerce at competition—Company of Guipuscoa—Wise conditions of that concession—Exclusive commerce—Modifications—Operations of the company—Injurious alteration of system—Freedom of commerce—Commercial revolution that succeeded—Opening the ports of America to commerce with Spain, and wise discrimination—Political and fiscal bases of the Spanish customs—Conditions regulating the commerce of Spanish America—Partition of commerce in the ports of Terra-Firma—Profits of the Spanish merchant—Management of cargoes—Importations by the commerce of the mother country—Exportations—Purchase of produce—Quality of the produce of Terra-Firma—Their price—Freight of produce to Spain—Insurance—Reciprocal commerce of the Spanish possessions—Cash in circulation—Commerce with foreign colonies—Commerce in animals—Exportation of produce to foreign colonies defended—Momentary opening of the ports to foreigners—Revocation of this measure—Inactivity of the Spanish marine in the Antilles—Opening of the ports anew to foreigners—Commerce with enemies—Contraband—With Jamaica—With Curacao—With Trinidad—With Surinam—Number employed in the contraband—Manner of effecting the contraband—Merchandise suited to the Spaniards—Retail merchants—Consulate—Conditions of eligibility—Appointments—Revenue—Competence—Form of procedure—Deputies of the consulate—Assembly of the consulate—Its privileges—Statement of duties of entrance, departure, &c.

First commercial Relations between Spain and her Colonies.

WHATEVER may have been the inducements which conducted Columbus to America, it is certain that the qualities of those productions which nature has exclusively granted to the torrid zone, was far from entering into his calculations. During a long time, America was not appreciated, either by that

great man or his successors, except for the richness and abundance of its metals. Spain, though much more enlightened at the present day, and furnished with the example of other nations, who also possess colonies, does not yet appreciate her own but in proportion to the gold and silver obtained from their mines. The most fertile soil, which promises to the cultivator periodical and inexhaustible riches, is regarded by the Spaniard with indifference, when compared with a sterile and mountainous tract, covered with solid rocks of schistus or granite—the signs, though not infallible, of a mine. That region in which the land yields nothing except from cultivation, envies the lot of that in which excavations have been attended with some success. In short, men become planters only because they are unable to become miners.

This preference given to metals over commercial produce, has deprived Spain of the obvious and lucrative exchange of necessary articles, which the difference of productions between the old and new continent presented. Spain might render all the nations of Europe tributary, for the productions of the torrid zone, as America already was for those of Europe. But, during more than a hundred and fifty years, in which she had exclusive possession of America, nothing was seen to arrive in Europe, from that continent, but gold and silver.

Fate ordained, that in the same epoch, when Spain laid the foundation of her sovereignty in America, she should experience at home, a revolution injurious to the arts, and to the new relations she had formed.

The expulsion of the Moors, and the emigration of national mechanics, on whom fell the weight of those taxes formerly paid by the Moors, occasioned the ruin of manufactures. Government did not perceive, or appeared not to perceive, the wound given to the state; because the money furnished by America enabled her to purchase from abroad, those articles no longer produced within the realm.

In the mean time, all Europe envied the wealth derived by Spain from her American possessions. Imagination, ever apt to exaggerate the wonderful, depicted these distant countries, as filled with sources of gold and silver, where cupidity might be satiated, without the slightest labour or least delay. Hardy, enterprising and ambitious men, did not hesitate to detach themselves from their respective nations, of which they were the refuse with respect to their morals, but the select in regard to their intrepidity:—they turned their attention to these regions, which withheld fortunes from Europe, to lavish them on those who dared to brave the dangers of the sea.—The laws of the Indies, prohibited all strangers from settling those parts of America, in which they were enforced. The obstacles resulting from those prohibitions, compelled the adventurers to seize on the Antilles, where they hoped to find the same treasures obtained by the Spaniards on the continent. After the first researches, the most restless and courageous of them, resolved to punish the Spaniards for thus refusing to strangers, a participation in their labours and good fortune, by seizing the cargoes destined for Spain. The little island of Tortua, situate on the

northern side of St. Domingo, was chosen for the rendezvous, and the residence of these vicious, but wonderful men, who are distinguished in history, by the title of *filbustiers*, or buccaneers. The acts of piracy, or if you please, of heroism, which nourished their ambition and enterprise, during more than fifty years, are foreign to my subject. It is sufficient to say that their number was preserved, and even augmented by other adventurers, similar in courage, hardihood and morals; but at length, fatigue, versatility, or reason, directed their emulation towards territorial productions; and the love of country induced them to demand from the government to which they belonged, chiefs sufficiently intelligent to govern them.

Establishment of the French in America, and their Colonial System.

It was then that the French, governed by the last king who knew how to make it respected, and administered by Colbert, the most able and virtuous of ministers, thought seriously of forming solid establishments in America. A friend to the arts, a protector of manufactures, an enthusiast in regard to agriculture, he formed a plan for connecting the mother country with the colonies; and he was careful not to take as a model, the conduct of Spain towards her colonial possessions. Colbert conceived that nature had established between France and America, a reciprocity of wants, which should form a reciprocity of exchanges advantageous to the French of both

hemispheres: their political and commercial relations were fixed upon this basis, the most solid that imagination can suggest.

In exchange for the protection accorded by government, a religious obligation was imposed on the colonies, to supply their wants by consuming exclusively the productions of France, and to consecrate their produce exclusively to their commerce with the mother country. But the absolute exemption from duties, on every thing imported from France, and the very trivial duties imposed on colonial produce, rendered these restrictions preferable to a liberty of commerce with all nations: for in that case, the French commerce, less assured of reimbursement, would not have made those considerable advances, to which the colonies are indebted for their increase. The royal treasury took no part in the regulation of these distant possessions; the French government reserved to itself all the advantages of commerce. The freedom from duties extended not only to the departure from France, and entrance into the colonies, but also to those articles which the commerce of the mother country received from foreign parts into France, for the destination of the colonies. Thus, foreign as well as national merchandize, which formed the cargoes of French vessels, were at the same price in the colonies as in the manufactories, with the addition of freight, and of moderate profits to the French merchant who made the shipment.

By this vast and profound policy, which no other country has had the courage, the generosity, or the wisdom fully to imitate, the French colonies became

general markets for all the other European establishments ; in particular for the Spanish settlements, which were in their neighbourhood, and on which they bordered in numerous points.

If the revolution has for an instant suspended this secondary commerce, the return of order, and the same regulations, will naturally re-establish it.

The extreme moderation of duties on produce, as well at their embarkation from the colonies, as at their arrival in France, and extending even to their new departure for abroad, places in the hands of French commerce, the exclusive sale of colonial produce in the different markets of Europe.

The English, the only competitors to be apprehended, on receiving their sugar in London, are oppressed with a duty of eighteen per cent more than is paid in France on colonial produce. They must, therefore, become losers in foreign ports, where the French merchants are contented with moderate profits. To this wise arrangement, also, was the French commerce indebted for the preponderance it had attained. It will obtain it anew, as soon as the abundance of colonial productions shall give to these speculations their ancient range.

Causes which prevent Spain from following the same System.

Spain long since has discerned the excellence of such a system, and would have adopted it, if its manufactures could supply the wants of America.— But, being compelled to obtain all, or nearly all,

from abroad, it has perceived with regret, that its commerce must be an agent to that of other nations, among whom must necessarily be diffused all those means of prosperity which confirm their relations with America.

That all may not be lost, it has used the prerogative of sovereignty, in establishing considerable duties on merchandize, which multiply with every new destination. The product of these duties diminishes, without doubt, the mass of interior imposts of the metropolis: this is almost the only benefit resulting to the Spanish nation from its immense establishment in the new world.

The fiscal theory introduced local imposts into America, in addition to those duties, of which a description will be found in Chapter IX. Their product serves to furnish salaries to an infinite number of offices which the Spaniards of both worlds solicit with eagerness and occupy with dignity.

Mexico and Peru so completely captivated the attention of Spain, in the first moments of discovery, that all the residue of America was regarded with indifference; and their mines appeared so precious that the other productions were not taken into calculation. Hence the province of Venezuela and its dependencies were only so far prized as it was imagined that some productive mine would give them value. Several were absolutely discovered, which excited hopes; but happily, various considerations occasioned their abandonment. Spanish commerce carefully avoided those shores, since it could neither expect a prompt nor an advantageous sale of its cargoes. If by chance

any vessel did appear upon these coasts, it was only to deceive the Spaniards, and to carry off the effects of the Indians, and even the Indians themselves.

First commercial Relations of Venezuela with Spain.

The first legal commercial relations between the province of Venezuela and the mother country appears to have been solicited by the colonists. Nothing arrived from Spain. Every thing was wanting in these countries, abandoned to their poverty. Neither the Spaniards, occupied in conquest, nor the inhabitants of Coro, Tocuyo, Borburata, Barquisimeto, Valencia, Truxillo and Collado, the only cities then founded, were supplied, either for combat or for cultivation, with any thing but what nature and the soil furnished them. The former were sustained by their ambition, the latter by their perseverance.

In one of those intervals, when the reins of government passed into the hands of the cabildos, a deputy of the province, named Sancho Brizeno was sent to Spain, as has been said in Chapter V. Article Cabildos : he was, among other things, to solicit from the king permission for the annual arrival, at the port of Borburata, of a vessel from Spain, the cargo of which should pay only half of the enormous duties of entry and departure, imposed on the commerce with America. This request was granted, on the 8th December, 1560 ; the vessel arrived every year at Borburata, and, after that port was abandoned, it came to Laguaira, until an epoch which history has neglected to transmit. Probably it continued until the inhabi-

tants had found more convenient expedients to procure the same articles.

During the whole of the sixteenth century, the province of Venezuela procured no kind of commercial produce. The daily expectation of discovering mines, stifled every idea of agriculture, though it incessantly disappointed the hopes of those infatuated enthusiasts. Cupidity received no other aliment but that derived from the pearls in the environs of Margaritta. Here the pearl fishery was carried on with equal activity and inhumanity; but soon, by means of sacrificing Spaniards and Indians to this murderous occupation, the bank of oysters which produced them was exhausted.

Interloping Commerce of the Hollanders.

In 1634, the Hollanders seized the island of Curacao, which they made upon the instant a considerable emporium of merchandize. It was then that the inhabitants of Terra-Firma, encouraged by these new and industrious neighbours, thought seriously of profiting by the superfluity of their productions, which the Hollanders would receive in exchange for the commodities they had to sell. They attached themselves particularly to the culture of cacao; which, with hides, constituted during a long time, the objects of a commerce, rapidly augmented by their necessities.

Fruitless Competition of Spanish Commerce.

This new state of things was scarcely known in Spain, when permission was solicited and obtained to send two commercial vessels to Venezuela. Such was the system of Spain with regard to its colonies, that no expedition to America could be undertaken without permission from the king: a permission obtained with difficulty and much expense; and with the charge of paying enormous duties, and making the harbour of Seville the place of departure and return.

The merchandize, already dear, from being the workmanship of Spain, or from the profits of a second hand, if of foreign manufacture, was still loaded with additional charges. Folly or ignorance alone, could expect advantages from shipments to a country, where the same articles were carried by the commerce of Holland, without duties, without shackles, and directly from the manufactories of Europe.—These speculations were of course, ruinous. The two Spanish vessels sold their cargoes at a loss of sixty per cent, and received scarcely any lading in return. This experiment was sufficient to warn Spanish commerce against further expeditions to these countries.

From this time, the trade of the Hollanders with Terra-Firma became more open and more extended. The residue of the century elapsed, without the arrival of a single vessel from Spain. During the first thirty years of the succeeding century, the concourse of Spanish vessels, though very great in comparison

to arrivals during the preceding forty years, bore no proportion to the quantity of cacao produced in the province of Venezuela, and exported by the Spaniards to its legal destinations. The annual produce of the province amounted to sixty-five thousand quintals of cacao, while the legal exports were only twenty-one thousand quintals, to Spain, Vera-Cruz, St. Domingo, the Canaries, and the other Spanish possessions. All the residue went off in contraband.

The Spanish government perceived with pleasure, that a province so long disregarded, gave well founded hopes of ranking among the most interesting possessions of America; yet it saw with pain, that all its useful connexions were with foreigners. No expedient suggested itself to the minister, for directing its commerce exclusively to the metropolis, but the establishment of a severe inspection, which should prevent all communication with the Hollanders. The contraband trade was persecuted with ardor. Though many confiscations were pronounced, many fines exacted, a degrading punishment inflicted, numerous families ruined, the evil remained the same. It was supported by the nature of things, much more potent than all the coercive expedients of human invention.

Company of Guipuscoa.

In 1728, some Biscayan merchants made a proposition to the king, that they would, at their own expense, destroy the contraband trade of foreigners, with the province of Venezuela; provided that they

should be permitted to supply the country and export its produce to the metropolis. Never were circumstances more favourable; never was a proposition more readily adopted. It encountered some local difficulty; for the vessels destined for America ought to have cleared out from and returned to the ports of Biscay, which was reputed foreign to the royal duties, in place of the port of Cadiz, where all expeditions for America must be made. But the manner in which the greater point was regulated, proves that perseverance overcomes all obstacles.

Wise Conditions of the Concession.

The royal grant permitted that the province of Guipuscoa should form a company, and send annually to the province of Venezuela two vessels of forty or fifty guns, laden with the productions of Spain, which should make their discharge at the port of Lagaira; that they should cruise from the mouth of the Oronoko to the Rio-de-la-Hache, to seize all vessels in the contraband trade. To this effect his majesty would give them letters patent.

In 1734, the company obtained permission to send as many vessels as it pleased; and liberty to dispatch cargoes from St. Sebastian and Passage, on paying to the king the same duties which would be incurred if the vessels departed from Cadiz: but the returns must be made directly to Cadiz, for the payment of the duties imposed on colonial produce. A third of captures made from contraband traders, was adjudged to the crew of the captor, and the other two-thirds

to the company. The merchandise captured was to be sold at Caraccas, subject to the customary duties. Cargoes of cacao seized by the cruisers were to be sent to Spain ; and the company might arm such captured vessels, as were suitable for their purpose.— The company's factors had the privilege of sending to Vera-Cruz, the cacao which its vessels could not export to Spain. The company was expressly obligated to supply not only the province of Venezuela, but also of Cumana, Margareta and Trinidad. The governor of Caraccas was invested with the right of deciding on every thing relative to the commerce of the company of which he was nominated judge conservator. An appeal from his decision must be carried to the council of the Indies. Finally, the king promises his protection to the company, and declares that any person may be concerned in its commerce, either directly or indirectly, *without derogation to his nobility, and without loss of honour, estate or reputation.*

We remark with astonishment, that all the conditions imposed on the company of Guipuscoa were only balanced by the simple permission of commerce with certain provinces of Terra-Firma. The king reserved the right of granting similar privileges to others, if the advantages expected from this grant were not obtained ; and the company could only depend on the choice of its agents, the economy of its expenses, and the wisdom of its administration, to render useless the efforts of competition. It is certain that this measure, where more depended on chance than foresight, produced two wonderful

effects. It compelled the company to proceed on principles of moderation and justice; and rendered it welcome to the inhabitants of Terra-Firma. The murmurs which were apprehended have never been experienced, and the hopes given to government have been justified; for the cacao has been compelled to proceed directly to the mother country, instead of passing into foreign hands, as formerly, to be again resold, even in Spain itself.

From 1730 to 1748, the company sent directly to Spain, eight hundred and fifty-eight thousand, nine hundred and seventy-eight quintals of cacao; amounting to one-third more than had been sent there in the preceding thirty years; and the cacao of its first shipments, in 1732, was sold at 45 dollars, instead of 80, as formerly.

Exclusive Commerce.

The company thus established, proved satisfactory to government in all its relations; and had the address to profit by the confidence and consideration it had acquired, as well in Europe as in America, by soliciting and obtaining the useless privilege of an exclusive commerce.

By means of policy and success it had attained sufficient credit to attempt this proceeding, which perfectly succeeded. The company stated that, in addition to the advantages already procured to the mother country, it might considerably augment its relations, if the reimbursement of advancements necessary to the cultivators, was guaranteed by the privi-

lege of exclusive commerce. A royal cedula, in 1742, granted this privilege to Caraccas; and by another cedula, of 1752, it was obtained for Maracaibo. From this period the company appears to have alarmed the interest and excited the suspicion of the inhabitants of Venezuela, under the hideous aspect of monopoly. They could procure nothing less, in this measure, than a desire to place a yoke upon the province and to sacrifice it to the cupidity of the company.

History does not, however, show that the company changed its former system; but reason sufficiently declares that by the mere solicitation of this exclusive privilege, it has opened a door to all these fears, suspicions and calumnies.

Whether they were well founded or not, it is a fact that great murmuring was excited, and sharp complaints, that the company abused the victory it had obtained in banishing competition. The discontent became so general and so violent, that the internal tranquillity of the province was on the point of being endangered.

The dissatisfaction would certainly have assumed the character of sedition, if a prudent measure had not been adopted to calm the passions thus violently agitated.

Modifications.

It was agreed, in 1750, that an assembly should be formed composed of an equal number of members of the company and cultivators belonging to the coun-

try, in which the governor-general of the province of Venezuela should preside. This assembly was to determine the price to be paid by the company for cacao, nor should any variation of price be permitted, even in time of war, but in virtue of a formal decision of this assembly. Those inhabitants who were not satisfied with the established price, were also allowed to send a sixth part of their cacao to Spain, on their own account, and in the vessels of the company.

Mexico, Santa-Fe, St. Domingo, Porto-Rico, Cuba, and the Canary islands, retained the privilege of receiving from Venezeula the cacao necessary for their consumption. The company was also obliged to submit to the superior government of the province, the prices at which it intended to sell the articles received from Europe, and the approbation of the governor was rendered indispensable.

The annals of commerce furnish, perhaps, no example of a company, the monopoly of which has been so happily modified by law, as that of the Guipuscoa company. Let us cast a glance upon its operations.

Operations of the Company.

All the persons concerned in this company were Biscayans, and they held their general assembly at St. Sebastian: since 1751, they have held it at Madrid, under the presidency of a member of the council of the Indies. The immense expenses of this company, its considerable advances, the multitude of persons employed in the management of its affairs, the extensive assortments always found in its magazines,

the wars which at intervals have embarrassed its enterprises, and the profits resulting to the stockholders, are circumstances which have presented much difficulty. The success that has attended it can only be explained by the wise rules of its administration, the fidelity of its various superintendants, who are always taken from Biscay, and, above all, the scrupulous prudence which ever directs its operations. At all times, both of peace and war, the vessels of the company were insured against the dangers of navigation.

Being obliged to substitute its own commerce for that formerly carried on by strangers, the company established cruizers on the coasts and posts on the land, to destroy the contraband trade. For this service ten armed vessels, containing 86 guns and 518 men were employed, and 102 men on land: the support and pay of this establishment cost, annually, 200,000 dollars. In the ports granted to the company, superb edifices were constructed to accommodate its factors and deposit its wares. The wharves or coves of Laguira and Porto-Cavello have been made by the company: the former, 175 feet long and 23 broad, the latter, 230 long and 30 broad. It has advanced to the inhabitants 640,000 dollars, without interest, and without hope of reimbursement, but from the produce which it receives, at a price fixed by the assembly just described. Since the establishment of this company, several villages in the province of Venezuela have sprung into existence: as Panaguira, Goatira, Calabazo, St. Juan-Baptiste-del-Pao, Montalvan, Ospino, La Savanna d'Ocumare, all the establishments from Macarao to the river Tuy,

Volcano, San-Pedro, Lagunetas, Mostazas, and le Frayle. The company sends annually to Terra-Firma six vessels of at least three hundred tons each. Before its establishment, cacao was the only commercial produce known in the province of Venezuela; the company has added hides and tobacco, the annual exportation of which amounts to 200,000 dollars.

From 1735 to 1763, the cultivation of cacao took a prodigious increase. At the first period, the whole produce of the province was estimated at sixty-five thousand quintals, while in 1763, there were embarked, directly

	Quintals.
For Spain - - - -	50,319
For Vera Cruz - - - -	16,864
For the Canaries - - - -	11,160
For St. Domingo, Porto-Rico } and Havanna }	2,316
Local consumption - - - -	30,000
Total - - - - -	<hr/> 110,659

During the same interval, the plains to the south of Caraccas, which nature has rendered suitable for the raising of animals, acquired triple the number they formerly had possessed. The various duties, till then insufficient to defray the expenses of government, became adequate to every charge; and the king was exempted from the obligation he had been under, during near two hundred years, of sending money from Mexico to Venezuela and Cumana, for the payment of the tribunals and troops. In short, every thing in the province of Venezuela assumed a cheerful aspect, an air of prosperity, not seen in any other Spanish possession.

Total Change of System.

This original delicacy of the company experienced a fatal alteration. The moderation of its prices, its scruples on the quality of articles, the mildness and forethought of its agents, all disappeared almost at the same time. A part of its profits were employed in tampering with the assembly destined to curb its cupidity, or rather, in paralysing its action by gaining the chief into its interests. It carried the forgetfulness of its duties, the abuse of its credit, to such a degree, as to carry on, with the Dutch of Curacao, the contraband which it had plèdged itself to its sovereign to destroy. By these means the planters were injured and the mother country deprived of the trade, which the company carried on thus shamefully with strangers.

Liberty of Commerce.

Such disorder should occasion, and in fact did occasion the dissolution of the company. It was not, however, as prompt as it should have been, because the new monopoly, the new exactions, were protected and defended by the partisans which the company had made, and which it preserved by the force of gold.

The Spanish minister could not obtain details sufficiently precise and authentic to strike directly on the company, for it was not less supported in Spain than in America. He acquired, however, sufficient information to comprehend the extent of the domain

where it exercised its privileges, in the vast plan formed for the commerce of America, and put in execution by the regulation called *Free Commerce*, of the 12th October, 1778.

Commercial Revolution which followed.

To perceive the happy revolution, produced by this regulation, to the commerce of Spain and her colonies, it is necessary to be acquainted with the commercial history of that country, during the three last centuries. It will be found they were entirely devoted to embarrass speculators, to restrain and destroy expeditions, and to convert every thing to royal revenue. In this new law, on the contrary, will be perceived the developement of a system entirely opposed to the one hitherto pursued. Reason will there be seen, if not entirely destroying, at least attacking the front of prejudice, substituting expansive views, to views circumscribed, and opening to genius activity and industry, a field which the routine or timidity of the ministry had kept hitherto closed.

The commercial laws, issuing from the council of the Indies, subsequent to the regulation of 1778, are dictated by the same spirit of wisdom, of calculation, of hardihood, which renders the modern change of the commercial system inexplicable.

Let us run over the different dispositions which, for twenty years past, concur to give to the commerce of Spain with America, the encouragements and facilities which that nation had constantly denied it before 1778.

By the regulation of 1778, the vessels employed in the American trade, should uniformly belong to Spaniards, and should be of national construction.—He who had constructed one for this trade, of the size of three hundred tons and upwards, obtained for premium, the reduction of a third of the duties on the Spanish merchandize which was embarked in it.

The captains, commanders, masters, sea-officers, and two-thirds of the crew ought to be native or naturalized Spaniards.

The sea-ports of the mother country open to America, which before were restricted to a very small number, are Cadiz, Seville, Malaga, Almira, Carthagena, Alicant, Valencia; (order of the king of the 27th February, 1794) Alfaguez, Detortoz, Barcelona, St. Andreo, Gijon and Vigo; (order of the king of the 27th July, 1783) Palma-de-Sainte-Croix de Teneriffe, Majorca, and Canaries, for their respective productions, and not for foreign articles, of which the rent is only permitted from the ports of the mother country; (order of the king of 9th June, 1799.)

Opening of the American Ports to the Spanish Trade, and the wise distinction which has been made thereon.

This salutary operation has likewise been extended to America, where very few ports had the privilege of trading with the mother country. At present, almost all those whose roads permit the entrance of vessels from long voyages can receive, not only the

ships of the mother country, but likewise make expeditions direct to the ports of Spain. The wisdom of the legislature, in opening new ports, has even been carried so far as to declare them *minors*.

To understand the advantage resulting therefrom, it is proper to know that Spain divides her American ports into *majors* and *minors* ; in the first they pay all the duties specified in the custom-book, or tariff ; that is to say, all the royal and municipal duties ; in the second, they pay none but municipal duties, as well on leaving Spain, as on entering the minor port. The statement of duties which the merchandises pay, are inserted at the end of this chapter, and will give the reader all the information which he can desire on this rather complicated subject. The object of this division of ports, is to establish a species of balance between the ports most frequented, and those which are least so. In the former the articles of merchandise are soon sold, and the re-loading soon completed ; whereas, in the ports less populous, or at least, within reach of great cities, or the fair of cultures, the speculator experiences delays which would make him avoid them, if he did not find a counter consideration in the diminution of duties. Thus, the part not cultivated, could never have the hopes of being so, because industry, the inseparable companion of commerce, would not fix itself in places which commerce avoided.

The major ports of the captaincy-general of Caraccas, are Goayre, since its establishment, and Porto-Cavello, by order of the king, of the 25th of July,

1798. Maracaibo is next ; Cumana, Barcelona, Margaretta, and Guiana are the minor ports. The port of Coro only, is denied trade with the mother country ; it was, however, the first of all those which were opened thereto, nor has any law expressly deprived it of this privilege ; but, surrounded with desert or sterile lands, the want of articles of exchange has naturally effected this deprivation.

The duties are restored which are received on merchandises going from a major, to a minor port ; but, to go from a minor to a major, they should pay the supplement of the duties ; in the mean time, by a singular favour, the vessels sailing from Maracaibo for Spain may stop at Goayre, without prejudicing the immunities of minor ports. (Order of the king, July 13th, 1694.)

Political and fiscal basis of Spanish tariffs.

The duties of entry and departure, imposed for a length of time on all merchandises, have undergone a reform, in which are combined as much as possible, the need which the revenue has of the proceeds of the custom-house, the protection required by the national industry, the activity of commerce, and the supply of Spanish America.

All the articles composing the cargoes destined for the colonies are divided in three classes : the first comprehends articles of the growth or manufacture of Spain, which are called *free articles*, because they are only subjected to duties which are almost imper-

ceptible, beside those paid by the other species, notwithstanding that they are above nine and a half per cent, both on their leaving Spain, and their entry in America. Those, likewise, are considered as national effects, of which the national industry has doubled the value, excepting articles from the cotton manufactories of Calcutta, and other parts of the kingdom, on which the duties should be received, in virtue of the order of the king, of the 28th of February, 1784, unless it is proved that they were made with the cotton of the Spanish possessions.

The second class comprises articles of contribution: these are articles which, though of foreign production, have received a degree of workmanship in Spain, which has either given them a new form, or improved that which they had; in such a degree, however, as not to augment their value more than a half; for in that case, they are reputed national.

The duties paid at their shipment for America, and on their arrival there, amount to about twelve and a half per cent.

In the third class is found all that is imported from foreign parts to Spain, and ultimately sent to America. All foreign merchandises pay, on their entry in Spain, fifteen per cent; on their departure for America, seven per cent; and at their arrival seven per cent, besides the duties of *internation*, *indulto*, and *consulat*, and independent, likewise, of other moderate duties, which raise about forty-three per cent, the price of all foreign merchandises, imported by the mother country.

Colonial productions, excepting cacao, pay but inconsiderable duties on leaving America, and on their entry in Spain, and are totally exempt therefrom on departing from Spain for foreign markets.

All unwrought materials which the nation cannot consume, and which go to supply foreign manufactories, pay heavy duties on their departure, which, by raising the price of the articles in which they are employed, gives the Spanish manufacturer an incalculable advantage over the foreign one.

The wool of the Lama, *vigogne*, and sheep, exempt on their entry in Spain, are subject to duty on departure, the first to eight per cent on their value, the second to fifteen per cent, and two dollars besides per quintal, according to the pragmatic sanction of 1800; and the third at thirty three and a third per cent, &c.

Such are the principles followed by the Spanish government, to draw some part of the prodigious market offered by the West-Indies to European manufacturers.

The effect which should naturally be produced by this wise combination of tariffs, would be to excite emulation and industry. But carelessness, or other faults in political economy, has deceived the hopes of government, and diverted entirely in favour of contraband, a measure destined to the promotion of Spanish manufactures.

Several rules have obliged the merchants to compose their cargoes for America, of national merchandises. In a little time they exacted but a third, and

to those who included more than a third in their cargoes, they gave a premium in reduction of duties. Finally, by an order of the 20th November, 1797, the king accorded to shippers the liberty to export as they pleased, either in foreign or national merchandises.

Conditions to authorise trade with Spanish America.

To carry on trade from Spain to America, it is necessary to be a Spaniard either by birth or naturalization. A stranger cannot engage in it even in the name, or as representative of his wife, his children, or his father-in-law. The system in regard to this, is so constant, that the last order of the king, which established this measure, is of the 6th of February, 1803 ; and according to another order of the 19th of May, 1784, and a cedula of the 19th of July, 1790, the productions and merchandises of America cannot be consigned to strangers. But, thanks to the national manners, which have for an idle, or as they term it, *noble* mode of life, a taste which the laws endeavour, in vain, to destroy, the Spaniards prefer the practice of lending their names, to the troublesome exercise of commerce. The strangers established at Cadiz, that general staple of American commerce, are enabled, it is said, with great facility, by means of a trifling consideration, to cover their expeditions to America with a Spanish name : it should be added to the honour of this nation, that there has not been an example where the confidence of the stranger

has been deceived. This fraud, if it is one, is far from being prejudicial to the Spanish nation, for it gives an activity to the trade of the mother country, which it certainly would not have had, if it was entirely prosecuted by the citizens.

By the orders of 30 November, 1762, and 7 February, 1792, the merchandises which went to America and returned from thence, for want of sale, paid at their return the duties of entry, and repaid those of departing if they were again sent out : but by order of the 26 September, 1803, merchandises not sold, returned from America to Spain, are not only exempt from all duties, but also obtain the restitution of those which they paid on going out.

Subdivision of the Commerce of Terra Firma.

The commerce of the provinces of Caraccas with the mother country, is almost all carried on by the port of Laguira, which, notwithstanding, its bad road, disputed for a long time with the other ports, the advantage of being most frequented.

The reason was that the environs of Caraccas, where the productions are most abundant, have no other vent but the capital, which in its turn, cannot embark them but at Laguira ; and as the population of this great city consumes the most of articles of necessity, comfort and luxury, trade is interested in resorting to it. This double reason occasioned always that Porto-Cavello, at thirty leagues to leeward, was never the port of shipment excepting of the articles

produced in its environs, as a part of the valleys of Aragoa, Valencia, San Carlos, Saint Philippe, &c. If it happened even that the cultures progressed sufficiently to exceed the value of what the European vessels brought, Laguira would be the port where they discharged their European cargoes, of which they could not otherwise expect a good sale, and afterwards they repaired to Porto-Cavello to load in return.

Maracaibo, Cumana and La Guiana, received annually each two or three vessels from the mother country; but at Maracaibo they only found as a return cargo, some coffee and deer skins; at Cumana, cotton, and a little coffee; at La Guiana, only the produce brought there from Varinas, Barquisimeto, &c. They arrived there by the river Apure, which pours its waters into the Oronoko.

Profits of the Spanish Merchant.

The trade of Terra-Firma is far from being as advantageous as is generally supposed, to the Spanish merchants. The common calculation is that the articles of cargoes delivered in America, acquire, one with another, by the duties, freight, assurances, commissions, and other inferior expenses, a value of thirty per cent above their price in Spain. A merchant thinks himself very fortunate when he sells the whole of his merchandises at thirty-three and a third per cent above the first cost; so that the neat profit is but three and a third per cent, and it may even be said that this scanty profit is fictitious; for it is a chance

if it covers the losses to which the merchant is exposed by the credits he is obliged to make to obtain the results of which I have just spoken.

Management of Cargoes.

The merchants of the different Spanish ports, pursue, for their account, the trade of Terra Firma, and all Spanish America. They consign their vessels to commission merchants, who multiply in all the American ports. They have a commission of five per cent on the sales, and four per cent on purchases. Sometimes, though rarely, the captain is consignee, and takes a store house, which is called the *registre* of such a vessel, or such a captain. This measure rarely turns out to the account of the shipper, because the captain, who can never know the country as well as those who inhabit it, is apt to dispose of his merchandise disadvantageously. If he credits liberally, the slowness and difficulty of recoveries, prolong the stay of the vessel in the port, and diminishes in proportion the profits of the speculation. If he does not credit, he cannot sell except below the current price, and meets with losses in a sale where a commission merchant would have gained profits.

The merchants of Cadiz, convinced of this truth, always consign their vessels to commission merchants residing in America.

The Catalonians alone make consignees of their captains; and, notwithstanding, they do not find themselves the losers thereby, because the captains find a

great many of their countrymen in America, engaged in mercantile occupations, who unite probity to the love of their country, and who exercise among themselves the duties of the purest friendship, under the most grotesque external. They render each other, mutually, all possible services; they are sober, laborious, and upright. Their speculations are almost always in common. A purchase of importance is always made by as many Catalonians as the article purchased can be portioned into divisions. It is thus that the greatest part of the cargoes coming from their country are sold. One or two Catalonians make the bargain, all the others remain silent. As soon as it is concluded, the whole swarm appears for the division. This uncommon fraternity is incontestably owing to the particular idiom which is spoken in Catalonia; it prevails equally among the Biscayans, without producing the same effects on commercial transactions, as among the Catalonians.

The merchandises sent from Spain to Terra Firma are deposited in the magazines of commission merchants, where the retail merchants go to examine them. I should not omit the singularity that these magazines have never any door opening on the street. They are always in the interior of the houses, and frequently it is necessary to knock at the door to have it opened. Whatever may be done by the laws, the national opinion still refuses the consideration to commerce which it enjoys every where else. The Creoles have still more repugnance to it than the Europeans. Every situation that is not an employ in the pay of the king, has no attractions for them.

The merchandises are sold to retailers at the terms of four or six months; but the payment promised to be entire, is oftenest but partial, and new terms lengthen generally the credits to years. It is evident that the vessel which would be obliged to wait the collecting of the payment for its cargo, in order to reload its returns, would consume the proceeds in expenses, or would occasion to the shipper enormous losses.

To prosecute this trade with some success, therefore, it is necessary to have funds already provided in America, so as to be able, at the moment of the vessel's arrival, to commence the purchase of produce, which is rarely found collected in sufficient quantities to compleat a cargo in a few days. It is with the collections, or previous cargoes, that the commission merchant is enabled to load and expedite promptly the vessel newly arrived.

Importations by the trade of the mother country.

But it is time to make the reader acquainted with the amount of the importations habitually made by the trade from the mother country to Terra Firma.— Those which have been made from 1797 until 1803, cannot serve as a rule, because the commercial relations with the mother country, have been almost null until the peace of Amiens; nor have they, even at this moment, entirely recovered their standing.

I believe I cannot do better than to report the importations of the year 1796, which formed a grand part of the interval of neutrality, enjoyed by Spain,

between its peace with France and war with England.

Porto-Cavello, not being yet open at this epoch to the trade of the mother country, the port of Laguira was the only one of that province which the vessels of Spain frequented. The port of Barcelona was yet closed, and Cumana and Maracaibo sent their produce to Laguira, because they had no vessels loading in their ports. La Guiana continued its relations with the neighbouring colonies.

By the registers of 1796, however, it is seen that there arrived at Laguira forty-three vessels, of which fifteen were ships, four polacres, two chebecks, twenty-one brigs, and one schooner, who discharged, according to the estimate of the custom house, as follows.

	<i>Dollars.</i>
In free and national articles,	932,881 3-4
In articles of contribution,	753,442 3-8
In foreign articles,	1,429,487 3-8
Total.	<hr/> 3,118,811 1-2 <hr/>

Or, 15,579,055 Francs.

These articles pay 281,328 dollars, duties of entry.

Exportations.

The declaration of war by Spain against England surprised a great many vessels in the port of Laguira. Many of them not to hazard every thing, and besides, their sales not being made, nor the payments ready, were obliged to leave the greater part of their funds

in the power of commission merchants, where almost the whole has remained until the peace of Amiens.

During the year of 1796, therefore, there were not dispatched from Laguira to Spain more than twelve ships, five polacres, three packet boats, six brigs, and a chebeck, in all thirty-seven vessels; and their cargoes were composed of produce, of which the value was fixed by the custom house of Laguira at 2,098,316 dollars, on which the duties levied amounted to 138,052 dollars.

Purchase of Produce.

In no town of Terra-Firma, not even at Caraccas, have the merchants any point of assemblage to treat of commercial affairs, as they do in our exchanges: every one labours in the silence and solitude of his counting-house. Barter or exchange is entirely unknown among them. No paper is to be seen there in circulation; for they are strangers to the custom of discount. All commercial transactions are conducted directly and privately between the seller and the purchaser: neither have they any price-current. These towns are rather factories than places of trade.

The purchase of produce is not made, at Terra-Firma, as in the other colonies, in large quantities.—The city of Caraccas is the grand mart of the province; but its situation, in the midst of mountains, not permitting any other conveyance than on the backs of mules, the productions arrive but in small quantities, which are carried about the city to be sold to the best bidder. The planters have not, as in the French co-

lonies, either waggoners, or commission merchants, who receive and vend their productions. The planter has no ties of interest, and still less of intimacy, with the merchant. The wants of the cultivator often occasion a momentary intercourse; he offers to deliver the merchant, in a stipulated time, a certain quantity of produce at a specific price, which must be payed in advance; good faith sometimes presides at these bargains, and effects a happy conclusion. But often, also, the authority of the tribunal is claimed, to enforce the execution of agreements; and I am inclined to question whether the merchant is not always the demandant. The complaints generally turn on the negligence of the planter, the bad quality of the produce, or its adulteration. It is evident that such transactions are more prone to establish between the merchant and the planter, a distrust which separates them, than a harmony which draws them together; and that this misunderstanding is one of the greatest obstacles which the public prosperity can encounter.

Quality of the productions of Terra-Firma.

The commercial productions of Terra-Firma (as has been said in the preceding chapter) are of a superior quality to those of our colonies, excepting the cotton, the inferiority of which ought rather to be attributed to the fault of its preparation, than to that of the soil.

The cacao of Caraccas, after that of Soconusco, obtains in trade, the preference over that of other parts

of America ; even over that which is cultivated on the same continent, in the environs of the province of Venezeula. When the cacao of Caraccas is at 50 dollars a quintal at Cadiz, that of La Madeleine is at 44, that of Guayaquil at 32, and that of Maraguon at 25. The cacao sells by the *fanega*, or sack of one hundred and ten pounds Spanish weight, which is within a trifle of one hundred pounds French.

The indigo of Caraccas does not cede the honour of superiority except to that of Guatimala. No other known species of indigo has, within twenty-five or thirty per cent the value of the indigo of Caraccas. It is distinguished in trade into *flor*, or first quality, *sabresaliente*, or ordinary, and *corte*, or inferior. When the first is at 12 reals the pound, the second is at 10, and the third at 8.

It is impossible yet to ascertain what range commerce will assign to the coffee of Terra-Firma, because it has not been exported in sufficient quantities to have obtained a particular place in the prices current. But the form of the grain, and its flavour, which cannot be disputed, announce that one day or other, which cannot be far distant, the coffee of Terra-Firma will attain to the same consideration which its cacao has for a long time enjoyed. The sugar accuses the unskillfulness and ignorance of its manufacture, and eulogizes the soil which produces it.

Their price.

In the month of July, 1804, cacao was at Caraccas, 160 francs the quintal. (Its ordinary price is from 100 to 110 francs.)

Indigo, flor, the pound, - - 68 francs.

The sabrisaliente and corte in proportion.

Coffee, the quintal . - - 130

(There was but little in the market.)

Cotton, a quintal, - - - 60 to 80.

To the price of produce purchased at Caraccas must always be added, the conveyance to Laguira, which is done on mules, and costs 5 francs the load of four arrobas, or two quintals. The comparison of the prices of Caraccas and Cadiz, being an exact thermometer of the results obtained by the Spanish trade, and its relations with Terra-Firma, it is proper also to make known those of Cadiz.

In the month of August, 1804, the colonial productions yielded there from thirty-five to forty per cent profit.

But we must not forget to deduct the profits, the duties, the expenses, the capitals which languished at Terra-Firma.

Freight of produce for Spain.

Among the multiplied objects which diminish the profits of speculations from Spain to Terra-Firma, freight merits some distinction. It has been carried so high during the last war, as of itself to arrest the trade of the mother country with its colonies. Cacao,

the sole production which was sent to Spain, payed 12 dollars per quintal, of which three were payed in advance. All the other articles were in proportion.

In time of peace the freight of cacao is 3 dollars per *fanega* of one hundred pounds Spanish.

The waste which the cacao experiences during the voyage is charged to the account of the captain. To cover this they remit him three per cent, that is to say, of one hundred and ten pounds which he has received, he is only bound to deliver one hundred and seven in Spain. Often, however, the waste exceeds the three per cent allowed, and the captain is obliged to complete the hundred and ten pounds at his own expense. This loss is rated at one and a half per cent. This condition is intended to secure the care and vigilance of the captain.

Insurances.

The custom of insurances, which is equally prevalent in Spain as in other countries, enlivens greatly the trade with America. Without this sage institution, the number of commercial expeditions would be much less than at present. Cadiz had a chamber of Insurance subject to regulations approved by the king; it was dissolved by the enormous losses which it sustained at the commencement of the war of 1796, with England. At present the assurances are made in partial policies, of sums more or less important, which particular capitalists assure on particular ves-

sels ; the shipper thus chooses his insurers, and prosecutes them separately in case of dispute. This mode is, on the whole, more advantageous than the establishment of chambers of assurance. The ordinary premium of Cadiz, for the gulph of Mexico, is from two and a half to three per cent, in times of peace, and according to the season.

Reciprocal Trade of the Spanish Possessions.

The commerce which the provinces of Caraccas carry on with the other Spanish possessions, is of very little importance. From Barcelona to Havanna, on the island of Cuba, they carry meat salt and dried, which they call *tosino* ; it is prepared at Barcelona, where it costs a little more than 25 francs the quintal, and sells at Havanna at 60 and 70 francs. Returns are made in sugar, wax and silver ; from Maracaibo they send cacao, &c. from Coro, tanned sheepskins and cheese of the country ; from Porto-Cavello, mules, when they do not expect to make out by them better at Jamaica ; from Lagaira, cacao and sarsaparilla, &c. Neither Cumana, Margareta nor Guiana, have any commercial relations with the island of Cuba. All that these same provinces send to Porto-Rico, or receive thence, is transported by a small schooner, which passes each month from Porto Rico to Lagaira, to carry thither the correspondence which the courier of Spain deposes at Porto-Rico, in passing to Havanna. All this trade, together with that carried on with

Cuba, amounts annually to a hundred thousand dollars.

Some time since Laguirra had commercial intercourse with Vera Cruz, which was highly advantageous to Terra-Firma. It had formed there a new market for its cacao, which contributed not a little to sustain the price of this produce. In 1763, it exported to Vera Cruz, sixteen thousand eight hundred and four quintals. This exportation has continued during several years ; but at present is almost extinct.

Maracaibo made more expeditions thither than all the rest of Terra-Firma : they were composed of cacao, balsam of Copahu, &c. and in return glassware made at Mexico, beads for rosaries, sacks for baling, India stuffs, which arrive there by Acapulco, and a payment in gold or silver. This branch of commerce, however, was so much the more important for Venezuela, inasmuch as it alone furnished all the silver in circulation there ; and if a happy event had not replaced it, the provinces of Caraccas would have been condemned to a scarcity of money, which would have subjected them to all the disastrous effects of poverty. At the epoch when the navigation from Terra-Firma to Vera Cruz relaxed to such a degree as to create a fear that it would absolutely cease, the king permitted by his order of the 1st of September, 1792, that the national vessels which went from Spain to Vera Cruz, might touch, on their return, at Caraccas ; that is to say, in the ports dependent thereon ; with the privilege of carrying thither from Vera Cruz, flour and other articles, and em-

ploying their proceeds in cacao, indigo, &c. without being subjected to other duties than those paid in the coasting trade. The silver carried to Vera Cruz, for the purchase of its produce, was declared, by the same order, exempt from duties. Simple as this measure may seem, it does not fail to favour the national commerce, and to enliven Terra-Firma—the national commerce, because the vessels which go from Spain to Vera Cruz, find a ready market there for their cargoes, and at higher prices than can be procured at other Spanish ports in the neighbourhood of strange possessions; but the direction which local industry has taken there, not permitting the payment, except in money, of the greater part of articles of importation, they were obliged to carry off, in specie, the produce of their cargoes, and to forego the profits of a return, if the ports of Venezuela were not open to them—Terra-Firma, because Vera Cruz not having any thing to offer it but flours, on which there are oftener losses than profits, the vessels from Europe which leave Vera Cruz, can only carry dollars to Terra-Firma for the of produce which they go to purchase. By this means the provinces receive sums which would render its specie very abundant, if the contraband, of which we shall speak presently, did not occasion it to disappear at the same time that it entered. It may be said with certainty, that there arrives each year in the ports of Venezuela by this way, at least two hundred thousand dollars, without the circulation being rendered more active thereby.

Money in Circulation.

It is estimated that the mass of the current money, in the province of Caraccas, is not more than three millions of dollars, of which the fourth is in small clipped coin, which they call *macouquina*. Its form, to which no other parts will give the honours of money, and moreover its weight, retains it in the country, because it cannot leave it without leaving a third of its value. A bag of this money, which represents the value of one thousand dollars, does not actually weigh more than seven hundred; but as it has a currency which nobody disputes, the exchange for dollars is made with great facility, and without premium.

Commerce with foreign Colonies.

Considering the general system of mother countries, and particularly that of Spain, which passes for the most rigorous, we admire the complacency of this government, which permits the inhabitants of its American possessions, to trade directly with foreign colonies. It is inexorable against the admission, in its ports, of any strange flag; but it consents that, under its own, there should exist relations more extensive than any other mother country has ever permitted to its colonies.

All have imposed on their possessions beyond sea, the obligation of not receiving, except from themselves, their articles of consumption, and of not selling their produce except to the national trade.—

If any one of them has, like France, permitted its colonies to receive from a foreign colony, any articles which could not be furnished directly from the mother country, as for wood, for salting, or for their animals, &c. they have not been allowed, however, to send their produce to any other destination but that of the mother country.

The decree of the 30th of August, 1784, forbid expressly to pay whatever was permitted to be imported by foreign trade, except in syrups, taffia and merchandises from France. Spain alone leaves to its colonies the power of carrying to foreign colonies all their productions, excepting cacao. All that it has done for the national trade, has been to restrain the importation, in return, of plantation utensils, of new negroes, or of gold and silver. No vessel can carry to foreign colonies but these sole articles, unless before its departure it has obtained from the intendant an express permission, which is accorded with difficulty. In case of the highest contravention, all is confiscated, vessel, cargo, &c. and the penalty of the prohibitive laws enforced.

It appears at the first glance, that the great latitude of exportations should favour the progress of cultivation, and it was without doubt also the end proposed by the legislator: but the event has not answered the expectation: for it is seen that during the last year, (1796) when trade preserved the equilibrium which it should maintain in time of peace, all that went to foreign colonies in produce did not amount to 150,000 dollars.

But the mules, oxen, and hides, threw considerable sums into the mass of exportations, because these are the articles of which the foreign colonies are in want, and in which Terra Firma abounds.

Trade in Animals.

The Spanish disposition is more inclined to the pastoral life, which leaves very great intervals of repose, than to the agricultural life, which demands continual activity ; the Spaniard therefore prefers the arid plains of the Oronoko, which he covers with herds, to the fertile valleys of Venezuela, which he could cover with precious productions. From the village of Pao, in the province of Cumana, to Merida, that is to say, for an extent of more than one hundred and fifty leagues east and west, and a breadth of forty leagues, are *hates* (rude inclosures of pasture lands) which give support to more or less mules, oxen, and horses. Many planters of Caraccas have these kinds of possessions at a distance of eight, ten, and twelve days' journey from the town where they reside ; and the planters of Calaboso, St. Sebastien de los Reyes, Goanara, Truxillo, Varinas, San Carlos, St. Philippe, Barquisimeto, Carora, &c. have scarcely any others. The revenues of these inclosures are slow and precarious. The inundations and droughts occasion losses which often destroy the fairest hopes of the owners. The mules are not proper for work until of the age of five years. The females are preferable to the males. It is known that they sustain fatigue better, and that they

accustom themselves sooner to new pasturage.— There is a greater demand for them in the provinces of Caraccas, inasmuch as every thing is there transported on the backs of mules. No river carries the produce to the ports of embarkation, excepting the Oronoko for Guiana. The mules are also the only saddle animals used by the Spaniards of Terra Firma who inhabit the mountains, or who are obliged to traverse them. They find them more solid than horses, at the same time that they are easier to maintain, and endure for a much longer time, hunger and thirst.

In all the islands, both windward and leeward, mules are indispensable, as well for carriages, as for sugar mills, and can only be supplied from Terra Firma.— Trinidad receives them by way of Guarapiche; Tobago, by Grenada, Barbadoes, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Martinique; Guadaloupe, by Guiana, Cumana, and Barcelona; Porto-Rico, by St. Domingo, and Cuba; and Jamaica, by Porto-Cavello. Some are also embarked at Coro for the two last islands.

The port of Lagaira is in a manner shut to this commerce by the difficulty which the roughness of its road, opposes to the embarkation of animals.

By the immense consumption of mules, we may judge how much they must abound at Terra-Firma. It is estimated, in fact, that the annual produce is sixteen thousand, of which six thousand are employed in the country, and the residue go to foreign colonies. The working mule, called *saca*, cost during the last war twenty-five dollars, at the port. They were obtained for fourteen or fifteen dollars, at the spots where

they were raised, but no prudent speculator receives them at his own risk, till the moment of embarkation.

If the late war, from 1793 to 1801, had been a true war for Terra-Firma, the price of mules would have risen on the return of peace; but, by a singularity which I must be excused from explaining, the commerce of Terra-Firma has slackened since that period, when, in the ordinary course of things, it should have become more active. Thus the price of mules diminished instead of increasing.

In the supposition that the price of mules had been supported at twenty-five dollars, the ten thousand annually exported would amount to 250,000 dollars.—The freight received by the Spanish vessels, estimated at the lowest rate, and with a deduction of the mules which perish at sea, amounts to 150,000, making in the whole 400,000 dollars, or 2,000,000 francs.

But as, instead of selling them on the spot, the Spaniards ship the mules on their own account, which sell in the colonies for 250 or 300 francs, (50 or 60 dollars) it follows, admitting a loss of one tenth in transportation, and putting them at the lowest price of 250 francs, that they produce the sum of 2,500,000 francs, or 500,000 dollars, which Terra-Firma should annually receive in plantation utensils, new negroes, or money.

The precautions adopted by the customs, to have the produce of mules sold in the colonies represented, subject the speculators to troublesome formalities; but craft eludes a great proportion, favoritism and

corruption complete the residue. It appears by the last analysis, that two thirds of the value of the mules are expended in dry goods, which are introduced in contraband.

The number of cattle, formerly so considerable that it was sufficient for local consumption, and for that of all the Antilles, is at present so much reduced that it scarcely supplies the country. The want of exportation, and the defective regulation of the butcheries, occasioned horned cattle to lose their price by insensible degrees after 1799; and the hides acquiring an increase from the same period, the animals became only valuable for their hides and tallow. Horned cattle were estimated at ten francs upon the spot, and it was often necessary to take them to the city, where fifteen francs were obtained; but the expense and other incidents of conducting them, reduced the price to five. The hides were valued on the spot at five or six francs, and were sold as soon as collected. The proprietor, thus assailed by want in the midst of his numerous herds, resorted to the only expedient left him. Since the hides alone had value, moderate indeed, but certain, he was compelled to kill and skin the cattle to sell the hides and tallow. This office of destroying was entrusted to men mounted on horses, and armed with spears. Bulls, oxen, cows, heifers, all they could reach, fell beneath the murderous steel. The rest were put to flight and plunged into the impenetrable forests, where terror retained great numbers of them. This procedure ceased with the necessity

that occasioned it. The proprietors endeavoured to repair the ravages produced by despair; but the injurious example furnished numerous brigands with the idea of making a trade of destroying cattle, for the sake of their hides. The plains were presently infested by these men who live only on the misfortunes of society. Cattle were found on all sides, stripped of their hides, and abandoned to the voracity of birds of prey. The proprietors invoked the authority of the laws, the protection of government, and the assistance of the public force. Their complaints were heard, decrees were issued, and orders given; but the failure of execution assured impunity to the offenders and increased their number.

Prohibition to export produce to foreign colonies.

I was about to pass to another article, when I learnt that by a decree of the intendant, D. Juan Vicente de Arce, dated May 12th, 1803, the exportation from Terra-Firma to foreign colonies, was restricted to mules alone. As I saw nothing in this measure but a homage rendered to the principles of every metropolis, and a trifling injury to the commercial transactions of Terra-Firma, it at first appeared to me that no injury would result: public clamour has convinced me of the contrary. The duties, expenses of transportation, &c. being the same for good as for bad coffee, the commerce with Spain consumed the first quality only. The inferior qualities found their vent in the foreign colonies. This prohibition prevented

the sale of the greater part of the coffee cultivated in Terra-Firma ; because that most of the inhabitants, not having the requisite utensils and conveniences for perfecting the preparation of the article, confined their attention to the inferior quality, being certain of obtaining a price proportioned to the care bestowed on it. Spain did not consume a sixth of the coffee produced by the colonies. The other five-sixths must be exported abroad, where it is impossible that coffee purchased at the price of Terra-Firma, charged with duties, freight, and commissions, could sustain a competition with that of other colonial powers, brought directly to the markets of Europe. It resulted, therefore, either that the commerce of the Spanish speculator should be ruined, or that he should obtain coffee at Terra-Firma thirty or forty per cent under the price for which it was sold in foreign colonies. This abatement of value produced also the ruin of the planter, to whom no other resource remained but that of renouncing this species of culture. This result was probably desired by the government, in particular, if the preference should be given to cacao. But for a change of this nature, always troublesome and expensive, resolution and expedients are requisite, which few Spaniards possess. It is greatly to be apprehended that these discouragements may destroy the slight attachment of the planter to agriculture, and induce him to prefer repose to new enterprises, and to labours of a novel kind, the success of which is always slow and uncertain.

The produce of hides must suffer still more from the restriction of commerce with foreign colonies.—Spain receives more than it can consume from Montevideo and Buenos-Ayres, which furnish hides infinitely handsomer and cheaper. Spain has never had recourse to Terra-Firma for hides, except in those short and rare intervals when the navigation to Buenos-Ayres experienced extraordinary delays, or when war rendered it impossible. In 1796, forty-seven vessels dispatched to Spain, contained only fifteen hundred and thirty-one hides—the surplus of forty thousand furnished by the provinces. If, therefore, the prohibition continues, this branch of revenue will be lost to the country, without the commerce of the metropolis, deriving the smallest advantage. The king loses the amount of duties, and there is less money in circulation by more than 60,000 dollars per annum. But a remedy is already provided for the evil, by substituting particular permissions to export produce, in lieu of the general privilege which has been abolished.

Temporary opening of the Ports to Foreigners.

The extreme rigour of prohibitory laws was compelled to yield to the urgent necessities which the absence of national commerce had brought upon the provinces of Caraccas, during the last war of the eighteenth century. The seas were so covered with English cruizers, that no Spanish vessels could depart from their ports without the certainty of being

taken: every expedition to America ceased in consequence. The provinces of Caraccas were absolutely deprived of a vent for their produce, since the same cause which cut off all communication with Spain, rendered it also dangerous with those few of the neighbouring colonies which continued friendly or neutral. If it escaped entire destruction, it was only to support a state of langour nearly equivalent.

At another time these conditions would not have sufficed to awaken the solicitude of the Spanish government; but by the happy reform which I have already announced, reason replaced prejudice, and the boldness of reform was proportioned to the weight of the evil. In place of losing time in useless deliberations, and of waiting till the injurious state of affairs should grow still worse, the king yielded to the first representations. On the 18th of November, 1797, permission was given, for the first time, to neutral vessels, whether expedited from Spanish or foreign ports, to trade with Spanish America. It was provided that the articles introduced should not be of the class prohibited; and they were to be subject to the duties prescribed in the regulation of 1778, in the same manner as if the expeditions departed from the metropolis, and returned to some port of Spain.

By this measure, the Spanish nation, it is true, lost the advantages of navigation, and became tributary to foreigners for the amount of freight and profits; but the treasury saved its duties, and the colonist his produce.

Revocation of this Measure.

In the mean time, the commerce of Spain, more attached to its own interests than those of the nation, made representations to the king, equally earnest and bitter with those made by the French merchants against the decree of August 30th, 1804. The complaints were not disregarded, for on the 13th of February, 1800, the king revoked in all its parts, not only the order of November 18th, 1797, but also every other permission, general or particular, granted by order of the king, or by the governors, viceroys, and intendants of America.

The courier or packet bearing this fatal order, arrived at Lagaira, and published it in the month of April following; but fortunately for Havanna, the same vessel was captured by the English, in its passage from the coast of Terra-Firma to the island of Cuba; and in consequence of this lucky accident, foreign commerce was not there interrupted. The prosperity which resulted has frequently excited a regret at Terra-Firma, that the vessel had not been captured immediately on her departure from Spain.

The numerous promises made to government by the Spanish merchants, to regain the exclusive commerce with America, produced no other effect than expeditions which increased the means of the enemy, and occasioned bankruptcies, which suspended all commercial relations with America. Scarcely one vessel in six sent from Spain to the West-Indies, ever returned.

Even the correspondence of government was unable to penetrate through the English cruizers, which were encountered every where. During the whole of 1801, only a single courier or packet from Europe reached the Havanna ; where they regularly arrive every month.

Inactivity of the Spanish Navy in the Antilles.

This misfortune must be ascribed to the inaction of the Spanish marine.

Upon the declaration of war by France against Spain, naval forces were dispatched to the gulf of Mexico. A squadron was sent in 1793. It proceeded directly to Porto-Cavello, where it continued a sufficient time to lose a considerable number of men, by the pestilential miasmas. After a station of six months, it crossed as rapidly as possible from Porto-Cavello to Fort Dauphin, where a part remained ; the rest went to Havanna. In the commencement of 1796, the whole squadron, composed of seven ships of the line and ten frigates, collected at Havanna, where, notwithstanding the rupture with England, it waited as patiently for peace as if it had been a stranger to war. In the mean time, it was very possible for this considerable force to have disputed the dominion of the sea, since there had not been, during the war, more than six English vessels in the gulf of Mexico, as well for the defence of Jamaica, as to protect the commerce at sea.

Three or four times a year, at stated periods, convoys, composed of all the commercial vessels of the English islands, taking Jamaica for a rendezvous, departed for Europe, escorted by a single ship of war and one frigate. They coasted the island of Cuba, and sailed through the strait, without experiencing any more obstruction on the part of the Spanish squadron, sleeping at Havanna, than if it had been a picture. This squadron, which could have made a diversion in the West-Indies so advantageous to the common cause of France and Spain, not only left the commerce of the English free, but even abandoned by its supineness that of the allies. All the French and Spanish ports were successively blockaded, each by a single English frigate, while brigs and schooners cruized singly and captured all the vessels sent from France and Spain to their possessions.

A justification may be attempted for this inactivity of the squadron, from damages sustained in the hurried passages from Spain to Porto-Cavello, from Porto-Cavello to fort Dauphin, and from fort Dauphin to Havanna; and also from the diminution of crews.—Was then the boasted arsenal of Havanna emptied by enchantment? Was it also impossible to obtain from seven ships of the line and seventeen frigates, a sufficient supply of rigging and sailors to equip seven or eight square vessels?—a number which would have been more than sufficient to sweep the seas, and preserve their dominion!

I wave all reflections on this point. Criticism is not my province. I have promised facts; and I state

them as they appeared to me upon the spot. It appertains, however, to my narrative, to add that the vessels of this squadron were found decayed and not in a state to keep the sea, when at the peace of 1801, an order was sent to the Havanna for their return to Spain.

The Ports again opened to Foreigners.

On turning our attention to the provinces of Caraccas, we find that the cessation of neutral, and the absence of Spanish commerce, presented a desponding perspective, which no expedient sanctioned by law could alter. No resource remained but the contraband; and this abuse was carried to a great extreme. Previous to furnishing details, it is proper to say, that the government of Caraccas, with a view to diminish the relations established with the enemy, opened again the ports of Venezuela to neutral nations, without even imposing on them the obligation of making returns to some port of the metropolis, as directed by the royal order of the 18th of November, 1737. The decree, dated the 20th of May, 1801, and signed by the captain-general of Caraccas, limited this permission to the residue of the year, or to the return of peace, if that event should sooner take place. In fact, the news of preliminaries of peace arriving at Caraccas on the 7th of December, in the same year, all neutral vessels in the port of Lagaira, were immediately ordered to depart within a

month, and the port was shut against those which came after that period.

In the short space of six months, during which this permission continued, the Americans from the United States proceeded in crowds to Lagaira, deceived by a false idea, generally entertained with respect to Spanish possessions. They believed that money abounded in these provinces, that merchandise was estimated at an exorbitant price, and that the stores were encumbered with produce without purchasers. They found every thing the reverse of their expectations. Their cargoes were slowly sold and at a loss. Their return cargoes were incomplete, and purchased at prices which allowed such moderate profits, as were incompetent to cover the expenses of navigation. Part of these disappointments were occasioned, it is true, by the commerce between the Spaniards and English, which still continued, and of which I am now to speak.

Commerce with Enemies.

Were the English so ridiculous as to ascribe the treaty of Basle to the misfortunes of Spain, and not to its good faith, no longer deceived? Have they believed the alliance with France to result from topographical affinity, and not from inclination? Or, while sustaining a war which considerably increased the activity of their manufactures and proportionally extended their commerce, did the English imagine that they could make war on the government of Spain, and at the same time form with individuals

connections of friendship and interest, which are without example? Were they encouraged by the hope of experiencing no obstacles on the part of subaltern governments? These considerations, true or false, possible or not, must remain unascertained till English policy shall find an interest in their publication. Some facts have defied concealment. During the war which terminated in year 10, of the French republic, the Spaniards of America had not only the privilege of frequenting English ports, but each vessel had also a safe-conduct or passport from the English admirals, by means of which they were respected, protected, and even escorted by English cruisers. The safe-conduct answered only for one voyage; but was renewed without difficulty: at first for the sum of eighteen dollars, but the price augmented in proportion to the demand. No other formality was required than the exhibition of this passport on entering an English harbour, and to all armed vessels of that nation encountered at sea. The Spanish flag alone received this protection. No such secret understandings were attached to the tri-coloured flag. Every French vessel was a good prize for the English; but every Spanish vessel was not.

Whatever may have occasioned this singular conduct on the part of the English, it is certain that they acquired by it the exclusive commerce of Spanish America. This they enjoy with so much the less risk, as the Spaniards themselves resorted to the English ports, to carry their cash and their produce, and to purchase the merchandise of Europe. Jamaica was the emporium of Cuba, Guatimala, and, of

course, Mexico; of Carthagena, Santa Martha, and Rio-de-la-Hache, for the kingdom of Santa Fe and the possessions of the south sea; of Maracaibo and Porto-Cavello, for the province of Venezuela. Curacao was also the market of the two latter ports.—Trinidad had commercial relations with Margareta, Cumana and Guiana. There have been counted in the road of Kingston, eighty Spanish vessels, all under their proper flag; in that of Curacao sixty, and at Trinidad more than forty. This commerce occupied above four hundred vessels, which cleared out in Spanish ports, for some French or neutral colony, whither they never went. On their return they presented French papers, the falsehood of which, though evident, was never either punished or investigated.

Porto-Cavello alone employed in this commerce one hundred vessels, which exported in 1801, as appears by the register of the customs :

Indigo,	51104 <i>lb.</i>	at 9 <i>r.</i>	\$57492
Cotton,	18099 <i>q.</i>	\$18	325782
Cacao,	27700	12	332400
Hides,	59247	1	59247
Coffee,	3069	10	30690
Copper,	170	15	2550
Horses,	435	20	8700
Mules,	4311	25	107775
In other articles,			80000
			<hr/>
			1004636

The indulgence of the custom-house officers to the pretended destination of vessels, was extended also

to the cargoes, a considerable portion of which they allowed to pass without distinction and without duties. From my own observation, and the testimony of persons, whom I have no reason to suspect of exaggeration, I estimate the value of this favouritism at a third of each cargo. This sum being added to the above enumeration, enhances the amount to about 1,300,000 dollars.

These exports are still far from exhibiting the extent of this clandestine commerce: the cash that accompanied these cargoes, and the credits obtained by the Spanish merchants being included, the importation of dry goods exceeded by more than a half the value of exported produce.

During this same year of 1801, the Spaniards had no neutral or friendly colony, to which they could legally resort, except Guadaloupe. The Dutch, Danish, and Swedish possessions, were occupied by the English, St. Domingo had been declared in a state of revolt by the government of Caraccas, and all intercourse prohibited. It became therefore necessary that all vessels going to Jamaica, Curacoa, or Trinidad, should clear out for Guadaloupe. Hence the custom-house registers at Porto-Cavello, exhibited the marks of an active and important commerce between that colony and Terra-Firma; while the customs of Guadaloupe made no mention of any arrival from Porto-Cavello.

Habit had rendered this commerce so natural, that the destination of vessels for Jamaica and Curacoa, or their arrival from those places, was openly mention-

ed. The books of the customs alone declared that all this intercourse subsisted with Guadaloupe. The merchant and the planter, the public officer and the plebeian, were indiscriminately engaged on these expeditions, with the same security as if in full peace with England.

The English merchants, confiding in the punctuality of the Spaniards with regard to these engagements, formed immense credits, so that the produce and cash which came from Terra-Firma, were not adequate to purchase the merchandise accumulated in the English stores. This commerce acquired from these facilities an astonishing extent and activity.

Did the Spanish government believe itself incompetent to destroy and punish this criminal abuse; or did it tolerate these to avoid greater evils? The question remains undecided. The fact is, that these connections of the Spanish Americans with the enemy ceased only with the war. It was not until after the return of peace, and by virtue of an order from the king, that a judiciary inquiry was made concerning those who had taken part in that commerce.

Contraband Trade.

There was no Spanish possession in America where the contraband was not practised. The merchandise from the metropolis arrived so overcharged with duties and expenses, and the colonies of other nations could furnish the same articles at such inferior prices, that a profit remained to the contraband trader which

induced him to defy the fiscal laws and all their agents. In no part of America was the contraband more actively carried on than in Terra-Firma.

Contraband with Jamaica.

St. Domingo was, in the time of its prosperity, the emporium of Havanna, Vera-Cruz, Guatemala, Cartagena, and Venezuela. Every week four or five small vessels arrived at Cape-Francois or Port-au-Prince, each with 20 or 25,000 dollars, in cash, to purchase merchandise. Articles from France were preferred by the Spaniards to those of other nations. Their quality and price obtained a preference which banished every idea of resorting to Jamaica for supplies; notwithstanding the greater proximity of some places which I shall notice. It was after the disastrous events of St. Domingo, that Jamaica became the general magazine of the Spaniards from the gulph of Mexico. It must be declared, to the credit of the English merchants and their government, that they employed means to support this lucrative branch of commerce, which have never occurred to the French merchants. The latter relied on the goodness and cheapness of their merchandise; waited patiently for the Spaniard, sold to him for cash, and left to him all the risk of introducing the articles into his own country. The English, on the contrary, allow the Spaniards a credit, and often carry the merchandise to them, or escort their vessels. This last manœuvre has been observed since the peace of 1801. The cruisers of the

king's treasury having resumed, after the war, their functions as *guarda-costas*, the English established armed vessels on the same coasts, to drive away the Spanish cruisers, and protect the contraband traders. This protection was so active, that about the middle of 1803, the Spanish vessels employed to prevent the contraband, did not dare to leave the harbors, or, when they left them, took particular care not to keep too near shore.

Contraband with Curacoa.

The island of Curacoa, situate at 11 degrees some minutes latitude, and 72 longitude from the meridian of Paris, derives its importance and commerce from its vicinity to Terra-Firma, and, as has been observed in the beginning of this chapter, Terra-Firma is indebted to Curacoa for its first attentions to agriculture.

The Hollanders are careful to keep this market always well supplied with merchandise suitable to the Spaniards, and the sale is very considerable. Coro, Porto-Cavello, and Laguiria are the ports from which vessels leave Terra-Firma for Curacoa : their cargoes consist of hides, indigo, coffee and sugar, but are rarely equal to the purchases in return : the deficiency is made up by cash which goes in contraband. It seldom happens the cargoes produce at Curacoa more than five or six thousand dollars each, or that the cargo in return does not exceed ten thousand. If the exportation of produce to the colonies should con-

tinue prohibited, and that of animals only be permitted, cattle alone must furnish to the contraband trader a pretext for going to Curacoa ; for this island, having no agriculture, has occasion neither for mules nor horses. But the number of cattle required being limited to the consumption of fifteen thousand persons, it will be necessary to export cash for nearly the whole of the purchases : the departures from Terra-Firma, and the arrivals must therefore be clandestine, or it must appear that the touching at Curacoa was occasioned by accident.

With Trinidad.

Trinidad passed, by the peace of Amiens, into the hands of the English. It is situated at the eastern extremity of Terra-Firma, from which it is only four leagues distant, and is the natural magazine and resort where the contraband traders of Cumana, Barcelona, Margaretta and Guiana make their purchases.

The position of this island is singularly favourable to the contraband. The Spanish coasts, extensive, solitary, defenceless, and to leeward, offer both to the Englishman and the Spaniard the greatest facility for this commerce.

The gulph of Paria, which washes the western part of Trinidad, receives the waters of the river Guarapiche, which penetrates the province of Cumana. By this river animals for labour and for the shambles are brought from Terra-Firma to Trini-

dad; and through the same channel all the contraband articles consumed in this province can ascend with perfect convenience, or may be landed at several points without the least danger. In general, the cargoes proceed up this river, which are destined for Barcelona: they are thence distributed to Caraccas and other cities. The mouths of the Oronoko, which cross the gulph of Paria from south to north, and which are compelled by Trinidad to discharge into the sea by the dragon mouths, open to this island the commerce of Guiana, whence the surplus goes by the river Apure to Barquisimeto, Truxillo, Varinas, Merida, &c.

With Surinam.

The Hollanders of Surinam, carried on, during a long time, a contraband trade with Spanish Guiana, but they have been supplanted by the English of Trinidad.

Amount employed in the Contraband.

To judge of the enormous amount annually carried away from the provinces of Caraccas, by the contraband trade, it is sufficient to know that the cash in circulation is not augmented by the great accessions it continually receives. We have already esti-

mated that which comes from Vera-Cruz for the purchase of produce, at	.	.	\$400,000
Commerce with foreign colonies,	.	.	250,000
Hides,	.	.	50 000
Produce,	.	.	150,000
			<hr/> 200,000
			<hr/> 850,000

Although the two last articles are prohibited exportation by decree of the intendant, of the 12th of May, 1803, I have seen, subsequently, partial permissions, which render the prohibition a nullity.

It is necessary to deduct from this sum for negroes and utensils of plantation, the only articles permitted to enter, the sum of	.	.	.	100,000
				<hr/> 750,000
Residue,				<hr/> 750,000
Or,			francs,	3,750,000

This balance should be the amount of annual increase to the cash in circulation. It is, on the contrary, the amount employed in contraband for purchases made in the colonies. To this we may with moderation add twenty-five per cent for the profits of the contraband trade, and we can thus ascertain how much contraband merchandise is annually consumed by these provinces. This addition augments the sum total to 937,500 dollars or, 4,687,500 francs.

Measures to prevent the Contraband.

A great number of persons are employed, at sea and land, to prevent this illicit trade. The orders of the king direct that one brig, six schooners and six sloops, all armed, shall continually coast from the

mouths of the Oronoko to cape de la Vela. At the time of my writing there are only four schooners, distributed between Porto-Cavello, Cumana and Guiana; and six sloops which do not go out of the road of Porto-Cavello, but cost as much for the support of their crews as if they were in full activity.*

In the actual state of things, a contraband trader must be very unfortunate to meet one of these schooners. They only keep the sea at intervals sufficiently short and rare, and they must guard three hundred leagues extent of coast, which furnish every where suitable points for debarkation. Nor would his misfortune be without remedy, since by sacrificing one part of the cargo, it is not difficult for a Spaniard to save the other. A stranger would not be permitted to compound, or, if he should, the transaction would cost much more.

The dangers on land would be infinitely greater than those at sea, if wretchedness and vice had not rendered the vigilance and severity of the guards a merchandise that requires only purchasers. The conditions of the bargain are neither so easy nor so moderate in the harbours as in the country. Restrained by the presence and watchfulness of custom-house officers, the fear of being discharged renders the deputies more circumspect, without rendering them more honest.

The guards are formed into detachments, from which men are taken for established posts on the

* By virtue of new orders from the king, the vessels employed to protect the national commerce by destroying the contraband, are to receive a new organization, and an increase of number.

coast and in the country, and also for patrols. At Coro there is a detachment of thirty-eight men, one commandant and one lieutenant. The fixed posts assigned to them are Sabanas, Altas, Cumaredo, Arocuta, and Teques. There remains a detachment employed to patrol.

At Lagaira there are only eight men and one corporal, whose services are employed in the same harbour : they make also a circuit between Margareta and Lagaira.

The detachment of Caraccas consists of forty-eight men, a commandant and one lieutenant. They are used as patrolling guards, except four men, who are stationed in two posts on the mountain which separates Lagaira from Caraccas.

Porto-Cavello being nearer to Caraccas, has appeared to require more guards than any other place. It has a detachment of twenty-four-men, three corporals and one captain, for its different posts. They are distributed, four at Palito, and six at Cambura, on the road from Porto-Cavello to Valencia ; four at Patanemo, six at Yaracui, and four at the river Tocuyo. Another detachment, also, of twenty-four men, attends the harbour, under the immediate orders of the guard-major of Porto-Cavello.

In the harbour of Ocumara, at the east of Porto-Cavello, there is a post of eight men and one commandant.

Guiana has only a light squadron, which never departs from San-Tomaso the capital, except in extraordinary cases.

The service of the custom-house of Cumana, is performed by two corporals and twelve guards.

At Carupano, in the province of Cumana, there is a post occupied by one corporal and six guards, whose vigilance should extend also, over the jurisdiction of St. Philippe d'Autriche, or Cariaco.

Four horse guards overlook the environs of Saint Jean-Baptiste.

At the salt works of Cumana there is one sloop, to which are attached a corporal, a pilot, and six marine guards.

At Barcelona there is one commandant, one first and two second corporals, and fourteen guards. Five or six remain constantly in the harbour with a corporal: the other guards are employed in patrolling.

In each of the salt works of Barcelona and of Piritu, there is one guard.

The custom-house of Maracaibo has only five guards, the fort of St. Charles two. One is employed as a porter at the office, and two on the quay to notice whatever is embarked. A sloop, commanded by a corporal and furnished with seven marine guards, is provided to visit the banks suitable for landing goods, and the small coves of the lake of Maracaibo.

There is also a patrol of horse, composed of a corporal and six men, who are to guard the coast and the roads which traverse the forests.

Manner of effecting the Contraband.

There are three modes much practised in the contraband. In the first, the vessel enters the harbour and an arrangement is made with the guard, for landing the most precious and the least bulky articles, during the night. It would be impolitic and hazardous to discharge every thing in contraband, even when that is practicable ; for it is necessary that the declaration, or entry, made at the custom house, should contain some articles which may justify the voyage. These bargains are very easily effected, and with little expense, by the Spaniard who is accustomed to them.

The second manner is, to obtain from those employed in the custom-house, an abatement in measurement, weight, quantity, or valuation. It is not difficult, by this expedient, to save the duties on a third or a half of the cargo, without the knowledge of the principal officers. The complaints and excessive retaining fees, form a considerable part of the expenses attending this negotiation : presents make up the balance. But these two methods cannot be employed excepting under the Spanish flag : for every foreign flag is repulsed from the port by cannonry, excepting in those rare cases, when the circumstances of war render it necessary to impose silence on the prohibitory laws.

The third manner is, to unload the contraband on a part of the coast distant from frequented ports, and to carry the merchandises by land, to the place of

their destination. This method, more decided and direct than the two former, is also the most dangerous. A risk is hazarded, not only of being taken by the guards, but of suffering damages more or less considerable.

Before departing for the colony where the purchase is to be made, the point of the coast must be chosen where the unloading is to take place; and about the time of return, a sufficient number of men and beasts of burden must attend on the spot, to transport the cargo to the appointed town. From the moment of debarkation, the proprietor does not again behold his merchandises until he receives them in his magazines. The care of avoiding the guards in the passage, or of corrupting such as by chance they encounter, is left entirely to men who are paid moderately.

Distances of twenty, thirty, and fifty leagues are traversed in the constant dread of surprise. Forests, rivers, marshes, every thing is crossed according to the season and the dangers, which must be avoided rather than braved. The least uncommon movement which the conductors of the contraband perceive in the guards, keep them for whole weeks in the bosoms of the forests, living merely on wild fruits. They never resume their route unless all the motives for fear are dissipated. In short, after more or less delay, the proprietor beholds the merchandise arrive in the same state that he delivered it. Struck with the fidelity and good faith of the conductors, in such cases where unfaithfulness could not be brought before the tribunals, I have regarded them as prodigies,

until examples have taught me that the injured always constitutes himself a judge, and something more, in his own cause. It is this, perhaps, which has contributed to gain the contraband the blind protection which no Spaniard, rich or poor, refuses it.— A vessel driven by a storm on the Spanish coasts, is robbed and plundered by the country people, if the cargo is covered by legal papers : they succour and protect it, if contraband.

In the first case, they save the effects to appropriate them to themselves ; in the second, to hide them, to keep them from the revenue, and to restore them to the proprietor. The government, which in vain opposes to this opinion, the severest laws, invokes incessantly the authority of the church, to make this considered as a sin, which nobody will consider as a fault. Decrees of the king, renewed and published at intervals in homilies, order the bishops to announce to the faithful, that the contraband is a mortal sin, which communicates to those who favour it, and to those who buy or trade in merchandises of contraband ; that denunciation is a duty, the neglect of which would be a heinous sin. In short, the confessors are bound to refuse absolution to every smuggler who does not restore to the king the duties of which he has defrauded him. There is no time worse employed than that which the priest spends in making this publication ; for there is no act in the whole ecclesiastic liturgy which makes less impression on the Spaniard.

Tribunal for judging Contraband.

All affairs relative to contraband trade are definitively judged by the intendant of Caraccas, on the conclusions of the fiscal and the opinion of his assistant. The least penalty is the loss of all that is confiscated ; the heaviest is the loss of all the property of the accused, and the galleys for a specified time. It is in the different grades between these penalties, that favour and protection, or hate and vengeance are evinced.

Merchandises suitable to the Spaniards.

I should consider my task imperfectly fulfilled, if I did not give a sketch of the European merchandises which are most consumed in the provinces under consideration. The cargoes which arrive from the mother country, particularly those which depart from Cadiz, where three-fourths of the expeditions for Terra-Firma are formed, are never composed of more than a third of national merchandise ; and most frequently there is not more than a fourth. The rest is formed of foreign manufactures, which the Cadiz trade draws from different parts of Europe, and which are naturalized by means of duties. France yields to the mass of foreign merchandises nearly a half, England nearly a fourth, and the Hanse towns the surplus, excepting some gauzes furnished by Italy.

In general, the Spanish do not appreciate cotton good ; they adopted the use of them during the last

war, because of the low price at which they were obtained from the English colonies. Pieces of embroidered muslin which before sold at from thirty-five to forty dollars, were then sold, during the war, at from twelve to fourteen : all the rest were in proportion ; but accordingly as the magazines are emptied, the price augments, the use diminishes, and the taste for linen goods, which had only been accidentally suspended, resumes all its force. There is a choice to be made, which is not the same with all the Spanish possessions ; for although their propensity to luxury is equally great, yet their abilities are different.

Thus at Mexico, Peru and Havanna, diamonds, jewelry and very fine cloths sell better, and in greater quantities than elsewhere. At Terra-Firma false diamonds have proportionably a sale more advantageous than fine diamonds. Jewelry does not fetch what it is worth there, because the Spanish goldsmiths work in gold and silver at a cheaper rate than the French. The work, it is true, is also very different, but the form is nearly the same, and the low price atones for the defect of the workmanship. What contributes still more to render jewelry a merchandise of less sale among the Spanish Americans, is the idea they entertain that a pale yellow colour is the only proof of the purity of the gold. Whatever may be the effects of the touchstone, the prejudice rests the same. The goldsmith who proves the gold, always rates that which is heightened in colour at 4 or 5 carats below his penny weights of pure. They pretend

that the difference of colour between the European and American gold is owing to the alloy which the former contains. It is, nevertheless, true, that their jewelry in gold never rises above eighteen or nineteen carats, and that for their workmanship in silver, they only employ dollars, the standard of which is much above the silver used by our silversmiths.

Laces also form a part of the Spanish dress ; those of Flanders obtain the preference ; they should be handsome ; since, destined to form that part of dress which most attracts attention, it is proper that their beauty should announce the opulence which every one, according to his estate, would manifest. Their sale, however, is not considerable, because the use of them is restrained to principal personages and to days of grand ceremony.

The women wear very little lace, but to make up for it, they put to their veils and their church petticoats, (*jupes d'église*) black blond lace from fifteen to twenty inches wide. Narrow blond is used by those who cannot purchase the broad. In this article there is a luxury highly profitable to commerce.

All black stuffs are in great use among the Spaniards, principally serges, prunellas, sattins, and taffeties. The cassocks and mantles of the priests are always of one or other of these four articles, as well as five-sixths of the petticoats for religious ceremonies of the women.

Within ten years the use of thick cloths has become general at Caraccas and its dependencies. There are

few whites who are not dressed in ash coloured or blue casimere, or in cloth of Elbeuf or Abbeville.

Hats have also a considerable vent among the Spaniards. There are no whites except of the lower class, or boys, who wear round hats. All in employ or who belong to the military wear cocked hats ; the priests content themselves with giving to hats with low crowns and wide brims a turn which makes them resemble a tile.

French hats are universally preferred to those of other manufactures.

The young Spaniards have lately acquired a taste for boots, and they have become the ordinary wear ; they are bought ready made from the English possessions. The quality of the leather, and the fashion, which the shoemakers of the country cannot imitate, maintains their price, and exempts them from competition. It is not, however, the same with shoes ; it is necessary that those which arrive from abroad should be in excellent condition, nor do they command a very high price, because shoes are made on the spot at a very moderate price, and sufficiently good.

Among the coarse goods the gingas no. 2, britannias, *les morlaix*, *les rouens*, platillas, the linens of Russia, and *colettes*, are universally used.

Retail Merchants.

The retailing of dry goods is in the hands of Canarians, and of very few of other Spaniards. The or-

dinary profits of the retail merchants are from twenty-five to thirty per cent. This would announce that there are few trades which conduct more promptly to fortune, and in effect it would be true if the sale of each one was considerable. But the kind of life required by this profession being of that sedentary kind suitable to Spaniards, the shops multiply to such a degree, and the sale and profits are so divided, that there does not remain to each retailer more than sufficient to support his family and maintain it with decency. Hence it happens, that this class, which every where else rises soon to that of merchant, remains in its original state among the Spaniards, and that failures are oftener seen among them than fortunes.

It is not necessary to have profound ideas of commerce, to discover that these shops are furnished merely by favour of the credits which the merchants are obliged to give.

It is in fact rare for a retailer to pay for what he purchases, at the moment of its delivery ; on the contrary, the expiration of the limited time of credit generally surprises him unprovided. A little patience must be exerted, and he ultimately pays ; for this class is more distinguished for honesty than many others.

There are also at Terra-Firma a species of shops known under the name of *bodegas*, and others under that of *pulperias*. Their assortment consists in china ware, pottery, glass, hardware, tools, wines, sugar,

hams, fat, dried fruits, cheese, tafia, &c. They have an advantage over the other shops, in not being obliged to remain closed on days of *fete* and sundays. Their utility occasions that they are allowed to remain open from day break until nine in the evening. This trade is almost exclusively conducted by active and economic Catalonians and Canarian batchelors, and as it consists in articles frail and perishable, it is exposed to damages which must be covered by the profits of its sales; there is not, therefore, an article sold at less than a hundred per cent, and often double and treble. It is in this retail, painful and disgusting, that the commencements of fortunes are made, which are not seen in any other calling.

Consulate.

Until a very recent period all commercial affairs were carried before the ordinary tribunals, and submitted to the same formalities, delays and expenses of other causes. The intendant of Caraccas, Don Estevan de Leon, gave the idea to the planters of Caraccas, of making a demand to the king of a consulate, and he supported it with all his credit and talents. On this representation, founded on public interest and the prosperity of commerce, was intervened the 3d of June, 1793, a decree which established at Caraccas a tribunal of commerce, composed of the intendant, who is the president, of a prior and two consuls, of nine counsellors and a syndic, with their

deputies ; together with an assessor, a secretary and a scrivener, and two porters, who should be whites.

Its members, excepting the latter five, do not rest more than two years in office ; half of the removeable members are renewed each year by election, the well regulated mode of which is prescribed by the instituting decree. That of the 4th of September, 1795, has fixed the period of elections at the 5th of January of each year.

Conditions of Eligibility.

Marquises, counts, barons, nobles, knights of military orders, cultivators, annuitants, merchants, in a word, every white who lives honorably is eligible, excepting ecclesiasties.

The arms of the consulate of Caraccas are the same as those of the city, surrounded by the attributes of institution.

Appointments.

The salaries originally assigned were but for a prior, six hundred dollars per annum ; to each consul, four hundred ; to a syndic, three hundred ; to a secretary, eight hundred, and three hundred for a scrivener ; to the assessor, five hundred ; to a scribe, four hundred ; and to each porter, one hundred and eighty ; but, by an act of the 12th of January, 1796, the king increased the salary of a prior to sixteen hundred dollars ; of each consul to fourteen hundred ;

of a snydic to twelve hundred ; of a secretary to fourteen hundred, independent of the provision for a scrivener ; of an assessor to fifteen hundred ; of a scribe to a thousand, besides three hundred for a clerk ; and of each porter to three hundred.

Revenues.

The funds destined to cover these expenses, and all those which the consulate orders for the good of agriculture and commerce, proceeds from the fines pronounced as well by the consulate as by its deputies and the judges of appeal, and from a damage duty, fixed at one per cent on all articles introduced, or exported to Europe, or to other parts of Spanish America, and at three per cent on all which go to foreign colonies or come from thence, excepting mules and horses, which pay a dollar per head ; horned animals pay only one per cent, while new negroes, on their introduction, and gold and silver coin, are exempt therefrom.

The island of Margaretta enjoys an exemption from this contribution. The collection of it is made in all the ports, by the custom-houses ; but the proceeds are poured, on the receipts of the prior, into the coffers of the consulate, without being comprehended in the general statement of receipts. This duty amounts to from eighty to a hundred thousand dollars per annum. The administration of the finances, of which the consulate may dispose, is confided to a paymaster and a treasurer, who have each fourteen hun-

dred dollars a year. Their proceedings are altogether subject to the orders and decisions of a prior and two consuls.

Jurisdiction.

The principal object of the establishment of the consulate at Caraccas, has been the administration of justice in mere commercial affairs.

It has cognizance in effect of all disputes which arise between merchants or retailers, their associates and their clerks, on matters relating to commerce, as purchases, sales, exchanges, assurances, partnership-accounts, freight of vessels, in a word, of every thing recognized by the consulate of Bilboa, the ordinances of which should serve as rules to that of Caraccas. An order of the king, dated the 31st of July, 1795, assigns to the consulate of Caraccas, all causes relating to damages, or bargains contracted between the captains of merchant vessels, and merchants interested in their freight and cargoes. The tribunal is composed solely of the prior and consuls. If either of them is connected with or related to one of the two parties, he is not permitted to give his voice, and the other two are sufficient to give judgment. In case of long absence or the sickness of any one of the judges, his deputy supplies his place.

The integrity, intelligence and punctuality of the members who alternately compose this tribunal, is truly admirable. It is the most benvolent institution

that the king could possibly have given to the inhabitants of these colonies.

Form of Process.

The form of process is simple, expeditious and gratuitous. The prosecutor presents himself at the public sitting which is held on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week. He represents briefly his demand. The defendant is cited to appear immediately. The allegations on each side are heard, the witnesses present examined and papers inspected. The judges endeavour to terminate the affair amicably. If they cannot succeed they cause the parties to retire, then make up their sentence, which, signed by the judges and secretary, and notified to the parties, is definitive in all forms under eight hundred dollars. If the cause, however, is too complicated to be verbally explained, it is permitted, on the demand of one of the parties, to deliver a statement in writing, with the papers necessary to support it, and without the assistance of a lawyer; for the judges can oblige the party who presents it, to swear that no lawyer has been concerned in its formation.

When the sum exceeds 800 dollars, an appeal may be made from the sentence of the consulate to a tribunal, called *alzadas*, composed of the intendant and two judges whom he nominates. But if the affair includes a fine or penalty, or if honour is compromised therein, the king has ordered by a decree of the 21st

September, 1796, that the appeal should be admitted whatever may have been the sum contained in the condemnation.

Deputies of the Consulate.

The district of the jurisdiction of the consulate of Caraccas is the same with that of the captaincy-general ; but for the greater convenience of those under its jurisdiction, it appoints deputies in the ports of Maracaibo, Coro, Porto-Cavello, Cumana, Lagui-ra and Margaretta, to whom his majesty accords the power of judging all commercial causes, with the assistance of two persons whom they nominate themselves. Their office lasts for two years. In the other towns and villages, the ordinary judges exercise the jurisdiction of the consulate and his deputies. The judgments of deputies and of ordinary tribunals are, as those of the consulate, carried by appeal to the tribunal of the *alzadas*, with this difference, that the sum of 800 dollars, to which amount the decree of the consulate is definitive, is reduced, by the decree of 14 September, 1795, to 200 dollars for the judgments of the deputies established at Cumana, Porto-Cavello and Maracaibo ; to 100 dollars for Guiana, Varinas and Coro ; and to 50 for the island of Margaretta and other places. This same decree permits the appeal of the judgments of deputies and ordinary judges, before the consulate. In case of a confirmation of the sentence, it becomes definitive ; but if it is revoked

in whole or in part, an appeal may be made to the tribunal of the *alzadas*.

Assembly of the Consulate.

Independent of the tribunal of justice, the consulate holds an assembly twice a month, presided by the intendant and composed of a prior, two consuls, councillors, the syndic, and their respective deputies, a secretary, paymaster and treasurer. The members who absent themselves from the assembly without sufficient excuse, are condemned each time to a fine of 20 dollars.

Its Attributes.

By the decree of its creation it is specified that every thing relative to the progress of cultivation, the propriety of commerce, &c. should be discussed in these assemblies, to which the deputies and citizens owe the tribute of their observations. The king expressly charges the assembly of the consulate to render him an account of every thing which it considers worthy of royal attention, and to propose to him such measures as it believes conducive to the encouragement of the agriculture, the industry and the commerce of the country.

The 23d article of the same decree specially recommends to the assembly of the consulate, 1. To be well impressed with the necessity of constructing good roads from Lagaira to Caraccas, from Caraccas

to the valleys of Aragoa, and from Porto Cavello to Valencia, to the end that the facility of communication may render the transportation of produce easier and less expensive. 2. To have the port of Lagaira cleared, and a quay constructed, that the loadings and unloadings may be performed without damage. 3. To render navigable those rivers which may serve for the transportation of produce, such as the Tuy and the Yaracuy, as well as those which discharge themselves in the Oronoko.

It is evident, from the organization of this assembly, and from the nature of the matters submitted to its deliberations, that the king expected that much information would be derived from it, and that Terra Firma might expect from it important advantages. By the obligation imposed on it of proposing all the methods of improvement in agriculture as well as commerce, it became the arbiter of the prosperity of the country ; by the right which it had of corresponding directly with the king, and of rendering him an account of every thing in the provinces, which contravened his benevolent views, it should necessarily overlook all the local authorities. It was destined to be the support of industry, and the terror of abuses. It is neither the one nor the other, because its original members, little sensible of the importance of their functions, or ignorant of the management of public affairs, or shackled by particular considerations, or, perhaps, influenced by all these motives, did not regard their nomination to this assembly but as a favour purely honorary, and not as an employ in which they should develop their talents, their care and

their watchfulness. Their successors have found an imitation easier than a reform. Thus, an institution on which should repose the happiness of the citizens, and the prosperity of the country, was, from its infancy, and always will be, a decrepid and useless body, from which the political economy will never have any thing either to hope or to apprehend.

I cannot avoid expressing here the grateful emotion which I experienced on first beholding the decree for the establishment of the consulate. What struck me most was its date. I could not conceive that, in the month of June 1793, when the effects of the French revolution gave already the most sinister proofs of the danger of deliberative assemblies, the king of Spain should have established one at Caraccas, composed of twenty-nine persons periodically replaced by means of election, to whom he committed the right to discuss, and to deliberate in the same form as the popular assemblies, particularly for the economic part of one of the finest Spanish possessions, where a similar establishment had never been seen. I render to the boldness, the wisdom and the benevolence of this measure, the just tribute of admiration which is due to it.

I hoped that the examination of the first operations of the consulative assembly, would have furnished additional food and excitement to my enthusiasm.— But, having with difficulty procured the means of learning its labours in favour of agriculture, I found they consisted merely in having demanded, in 1797, of enlightened cultivators, memoirs on the kind of

cultivation peculiar to each of them, which remained for four years, in the hands of commissioners appointed to examine them, and to render a general report, without the same having ever been made or demanded. Desirous of viewing these memoirs, I found them at length, covered with dust, at the house of Count de la Grange, one of the commissioners. He lent them to me with uncommon facility. After having read them, I returned them into his hands, and I dare assert, that centuries will elapse before they will be again displaced.

Can a people thus careless justifiably tax the laws or the government with the slowness or the nullity of its progress in the arts and sciences? What could the king of Spain do more praiseworthy than to order the citizens to contribute their information to public welfare? Men whose torpid and sluggish dispositions prefer the repose and indolence of poverty, to the activity of fortune, should never complain of misfortune or indigence.

The only useful undertaking which the consular assembly of Caraccas has performed since its creation, is a road, not yet finished, from Porto-Cavello to Valencia, much shorter, less mountainous, but by no means as handsome as the antient road. Another road has also been opened, by its direction, from Lagaira to Caraccas, which goes round the mountain that separates these two towns; it will be longer than that which is at present in use, but infinitely more convenient; and it is this convenience which induces the government of Caraccas to hasten less its comple-

tion, for reasons which have already been stated under the article of *Armed Force*, chapter V.

The roads of Caricagoo, and the communication of Caraccas with the valleys of Aragoa, have also attracted the attention of this assembly, and have cost much money, without the effects justifying the expenses. Finally, to the consulate is owing the construction of a map of a part of the province where cultivation requires the most encouragement. Such is the whole work of twelve years, during which the system of agriculture should have been sufficiently improved to augment considerably the productions, while, on the contrary, they have experienced the most alarming decrease.

I will not certainly accuse the consular assembly of Caraccas with having directly occasioned that decline of commerce with which its provinces have been visited (it proceeds from other causes); but neither must it expect to obtain eulogiums for its zeal, to which neither its success nor its measures give it any pretensions. That the reader may, himself, judge of the commercial state of the provinces of Caraccas, it is proper to lay before him the exportations made in the four years from 1793 to 1796, compared with those of the four following years.

Exportations from 1793 to 1796.

367,819 q. Cacao,	at 18 dolls.	\$6,620,742	} \$12,252,415
2,955,963 lb. Indigo,	at 12 reals,	5,172,950	
1,498,332 lb. Cotton,	at 20 reals,	299,666	
1,325,584 lb. Coffee,	at 12 dolls. the q.	159,070	

Exportations from 1796 to 1800.

239,162 q. Cacao,	at 18 dolls.	\$4,304,916	} \$6,442,318
793,210 lb. Indigo,	at 14 reals,	1,386,117	
2,854,254 lb. Cotton,	at 20 dolls.	566,850	
1,536,967 lb. Coffee,	at 12 dolls. the q.	184,435	

Diminution,	-	-	\$5,810,097
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I know that it is easier to charge this decrease to the war, than to agree that it is partly the consequence of a bad administration. In admitting that this cause has some weight, it is unjust and ridiculous to be satisfied with a reason which can operate but in a trifling degree. War has no influence except on the price of produce; it cannot injure the productions otherwise than by depriving agriculture of the hands which it requires, and this has not taken place in these provinces, excepting with a few hundred of free men of colour, whom the defence of the country have retained in detachments in the sea ports; this circumstance could never have occasioned an annual diminution in the quantity of produce, to the amount of 100,000 dollars. Neither could the war alter the value of productions; they have borne the same price in the four unfavourable years as in the four preceding, and

the indigo in one of the former, was at 14 reals a pound, in place of 12.

This equality of price during the eight years in question, is the best proof that there have always been purchasers, and that commerce has always received and paid for what the cultivator has been able to deliver it, cacao only excepted.

It is, not therefore, in war merely, that we must seek for the cause of the langour into which the provinces of Caraccas have fallen ; it cannot be ascribed to any scourge, to any calamity, such as plagues, epidemics, droughts, or extraordinary overflows.— Providence has guaranteed Terra Firma therefrom. We must, therefore, impute it to injurious local dispositions, to the carelessness of those who are specially charged by the king himself, to discover and denounce abuses, to unveil vices and propose the means of destroying them.

The king would sooner achieve his object, in leaving to the consulate such matters only as relate entirely to trade, which it treats with a laudable zeal, and in substituting, as has been proposed in the preceding chapter, a chamber of agriculture, similar in every respect to that which we have in our colonies.

I have promised to terminate this chapter by a detail of the duties which are imposed on entering and leaving the different ports, in the extent of the captaincy general of Caraccas. This is the proper moment to fulfil my promise.

Statement of the duties paid in the ports of the dependency of the captaincy general of Caraccas, on all articles arriving directly from Spain, from the Canary islands, and from Majorca, and on produce freighted in return for the same destinations.

Province of Venezuela.—(Major Ports.)

On Entry.

<i>For the duty of</i> <i>Almoxarifazgo</i>	Foreign merchandises,	-	7 per cent
	Merchandise of contribution,	-	3
	Do. free,	- - -	—
	Silks 5 sous per lb.	- - -	—
	Sea alcavala,	- - -	4
	Corso,	- - -	3
	Consulate,	- - -	1

(N. B. See the nature of all these duties in the Chapter entitled Finance.)

For clothes and arms of the militia,	-	—
Per barrel of brandy,	-	\$1
Per do. of wine,	-	0 50

On Departure.

Duties of Armada and of Armadilla united,	2 per cent
Do. for each quintal of cacao,	6 reals of 8
For each hide,	1-2 real
Tanned sheep skins per dozen,	1 1-2
For a quintal of cheese and fish,	1-2
Do. of sarsaparilla,	1
Do. Brasil wood,	1-2
Do. tobacco of Varinas,	—
Do. of Caraccas,	—
Corso,	3 per cent
Consulate,	1

Observations.

1. For the collecting of the above duties of entry, the receivers augment eight per cent, the value specified in the invoices after that fixed by the statute of free commerce, of the 12th of October, 1778. This augmentation is conformable to the 21st Article of the same statute. Articles free and of contribution are only exempt from the duty of *almoxarifazgo*; they pay all the other duties.

2. According to the order of the king of the 24th March, 1779, the provisions of vessels should pay, according to their species, the same royal and municipal duties as if they made a part of the cargoes.

3. The collection of duties specified in the regulation formed, in 1641, by the paymaster Melchor Candario, or what arrived from Spain and the Canaries, was suspended in this province, from the time that they commenced to execute the royal *project* of the 20th of April, 1720.

By the statute of free commerce of 1778, and the royal order of the 27th of December of the same year, the trade of the Canaries was, in every respect, similar to that of Spain and Majorca: instead of a half real paid indiscriminately for every hide, there is at present imposed, in the principal ports, three-quarters of a real for each hide, or one real for an ox hide, and a half real for that of a cow, and only two per cent on the value of tobacco of Varinas and Venezuela.

4. Indigo, cotton, coffee, sugar, meats salted or dried, tallow, flax, hemp, and the wood for the cathedral of the Canaries, are exempt on departure, from the duties of armada and armadilla, and must only pay the municipal duties of the corso and the consulate. The sugar of Venezuela, which has already paid by the cultivators, the land alcavala, pays, besides, one per cent to complete the six per cent to which it is subjected by a decree of the intendance of the 28th of June, 1799.

5. The productions of Cumana and Guiana which are embarked in the ports of Venezuela for Spain, Majorca or the Canaries, pay the same duties as if they departed directly from these provinces ; but then it is necessary to conform to what has been said in the preceding article, for the duties which the sugar pays in these same provinces. The productions of Varinas, transported to Guiana, should be considered as if they originated at Guiana. (Order of the king of the 17th of August, 1792.)

Provinces of Cumana and Guiana. (Minor Ports.)

On Entry.

Corso,	-	-	-	1 1-2 per cent
Consulate,	-	-	-	1

On Departure.

Corso,	-	-	-	2 per cent
Consulate,	-	-	-	1

Observations.

1. According to the 21st Article of the statute of free commerce, the value of property contained in the invoice is augmented to five per cent. The duties of armada and armadilla united having been declared royal duties by the intendance, the 28th of June, 1799, they are not collected on the produce of Cumana and of Guiana.

2. Provisions destined for the consumption of crews and passengers, pay, on entry and departure, the municipal duties, as has been said in the 2d article of observations relative to the ports of Venezuela.

3. The assembly of commerce of the 25th of May, 1793, added one per cent to the two per cent collected for the maintenance of coast guards, on every thing which left Laguiria and arrived there from Spain; but, this supplement not being extended to other ports, they have continued only to collect two per cent at Cumana and Guiana for the duty of Corso.

4. The productions of Venezuela and of Maracaibo which go to Spain by the ports of Cumana and Guiana, should pay the same duties as if they issued directly from the ports of their provinces. Therefore, as is mentioned in the fourth Article of observations on the ports of Venezuela, there must be paid one per cent of supplement of the land alcavala on the sugar of Venezuela, but not on that of Maracaibo, for reasons contained in the following article.

5. Sugar coming from the provinces which have minor ports privileged, enjoys an exemption from

royal duties, and consequently does not pay the supplement of the land alcavala if it comes from Cumana or Lagaira, according to the declaration of the intendance of the 26th of June, 1799. (See what has been said in the fifth Article of preceding observations on the produce of Varinas.)

Province of Maracaibo. (Mixed Port.)

On Entry.

Corso,	-	-	-	-	2 per cent
Consulate,	-	-	-	-	1

On Departure.

Armada and armadilla united,	-	-	-	2 dollars
For the same duties which are paid at the port				
of Lagaira, Corso,	-	-	-	2
Consulate,	-	-	-	1

Observations.

1. The amount of the invoices is augmented five per cent, to make the estimate on which the duties are collected. And as to the provisions of vessels, see the 2d Article of the observations on the ports of Venezuela.

2. The order of the king of the 25th of May, 1793, specifies that the productions of Maracaibo, destined for Spain, shall pay the same duties as those which are levied at Lagaira. Thus, every thing that

leaves the port of Maracaibo for Spain, Majorca, or the Canaries, pays the duty of armada or armadilla. The sugar only does not, like that of Venezuela, pay the supplement of one per cent of alcavala, for reasons expressed in Article V. of observations relative to Cumana and Lagaira.

3. The productions of Cumana and Guiana embarked at Maracaibo for Spain, the Canaries and Majorca, only pay, on departing, the same duties that they would pay if they issued directly from their respective ports.

4. According to the assembly of commerce of the 26th of June, 1799, the duty of corso must not be collected at Maracaibo, except at the rate of two per cent.

5. As to commodities proceeding from Varinas, see Article V. of observations on Cumana and Lagaira.

Statement of royal and municipal duties collected in the ports of the captaincy general of Caraccas, on every thing reciprocally sent from one port to another of the Spanish possessions.

Province of Venezuela.

On Departure.

For the major and minor ports within the jurisdiction, or out of the captaincy general of Caraccas.

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	-	2 per cent
Armada and armadilla,	.	.	.	2

For each quintal of cacao,	-	-	6	reals
For each hide,	-	-	1-2	
For a dozen tanned sheep skins,	-	-	3	
For a dozen of deer skins	-	-	1	1-2
For a dozen of cheese and fish,	-	-	1-2	
For a quintal of wool and sarsaparilla,	-	-	4	reals
For a quintal of Brazil wood,	-	-	1-2	
For a quintal of Varinas tobacco,	-	-	12	
For a quintal of Caraccas do.	-	-	6	
Corso,	-	-	2	per cent
Consulate,	-	-	1	

On Entry.

(Major Ports.)

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	5	per cent
Armada and armadilla,	-	-	4	
Sea alcavala,	-	-	2	
Corso,	-	-	2	
Consulate,	-	-	1	

(Minor Ports.)

Corso,	-	-	2	per cent
Consulate,	-	-	1	

Observations.

1. Mules, horses, cattle and sheep, destined for the Spanish possessions, pay but four per cent in place of the almoxarifazgo, and the duty of corso, conformably to the order of the king, of the 25th of January, 1793, and the declaration of the intendant of the 22d of March, in the same year.

2. The municipal duties of corso and of consulate are paid but once, on entry or departure from the ports dependent on Caraccas. The articles of mutual supply between the provinces are exempt therefrom, according to the assembly held for the establishment of the first mentioned duty, and the different orders of the king ; but as there is not a perfect understanding as to the articles which should be ranked in this class, the intendancy has been consulted, but has not hitherto given a decision. The order of the king of the 17th of August, 1792, states that the commodities of Varinas going to Guiana, should be considered as mutual supplies, and consequently are exempt.

3. Every thing which has been directly sent from Spain, Majorca or the Canaries, to Maracaibo, Cumana, Guiana, or other major or minor ports, out of the district of the intendancy, and shall afterwards be introduced into the province of Venezuela, must pay the same duties as if this destination had been given it on leaving Europe, excepting the municipal duties, which are never imposed a second time, if it is proved that they have previously been collected in one of the ports of the district.

4. Articles which enter the larger ports of Venezuela, from Spain, Majorca and the Canaries, pay no duties on re-exportation to the larger ports of America ; and if this second destination is made for the lesser ports, the duties paid on entrance at Venezuela are refunded, and the declaration of the intendancy of 14th April, 1801, conformably to the royal

order of 25th July, 1801 : provided the merchandise has not changed its owner, and the re-exportation is not on account of a new purchaser.

5. According to the declaration of the intendancy, dated 10th December, 1795, the provisions of vessels pay the same duties as if they made part of the cargoes.

6. Salted or dried meat, tallow and sugar, if they are not to leave the district, pay the duties of entrance and departure, established with regard to provinces under the jurisdiction of the intendancy. But when they are exported beyond the limits of the district, the duties of the land alcavala, of the corso, and of the consulate, must be paid ; besides one per cent on sugar, to make up the complement of six per cent, to which that article is subject, according to the declaration of the intendancy of 28th June, 1799.

7. The rum of Venezuela, having paid the royal duty established in the provinces, has neither royal nor municipal duty to pay on entrance or departure. But rum which comes from places not dependent on the intendancy, must pay all the duties imposed on other produce, according to the ports from which it arrives ; with the addition of one dollar royal duty for each barrel of twenty-six flaggons, according to the decree of the intendancy of 22d June, 1799.

8. Salt from the pits to windward of Laguaira, pays only the royal duty established at one dollar per quintal, half payable at the moment of collecting it, and the other half at its introduction. The salt from

the pits situate to leeward, pays only the alcavala of their sale, notwithstanding that, by decree of the intendancy, dated 26th June, 1799, the general custom observed on this article, was ordered to be followed in the ports of the district.

Provinces of Maracaibo, Cumana, and Guiana.

On departure.

(For the larger or smaller ports of different Spanish possessions.)

Corso,	-	-	-	2 per cent
Consulate,	-	-	-	1

On Entrance.

(For the larger ports.)

These duties are the same with those paid in the ports of Venezuela ; but see the first article of the following observations.

(For the smaller.)

Corso,	-	-	-	2 per cent
Consulate,	-	-	-	1

Observations.

1. The officers of the customs have inquired of the intendant whether the productions of the larger ports must pay on their entrance into the smaller ports the royal duties established for the reciprocal commerce of the Spanish American continent. His decision has not been received. If it is in the affirmative, they must conform to the regulation established for different objects, as mentioned in the fifth article of the preceding observations, and in the third of those on the commerce of Spain with Venezuela.

2. Since mules, horses, cattle and sheep pay only four per cent in lieu of the almoxarifazgo, as has been already said ; and as the almoxarifazgo is a royal duty, it has also been inquired whether the exportation for the smaller ports can be made without payment of royal or municipal duties ; the question is still undecided.

3. The remarks concerning salt and rum in the seventh and eighth articles of the preceding observations, extend also to exports and imports made by the ports of Cumana, Maracaibo, and Guiana.

4. Here refer to the arrangements contained in the second article of the preceding observations on the produce of Varinas.

5. The provisions of vessels are considered, with respect to duties, as making part of the cargoes.

Statement of royal and municipal duties paid at the ports within the district of the intendancy of Caracas, for commerce permitted in time of peace with foreign colonies.

On Departure.

1st. On condition of bringing Blacks.

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	-	6 per cent
Corso,	-	-	-	2
Consulate,	-	-	-	3

2d. On condition of bringing Gold, Silver, implements of Agriculture, and Plantation utensils.

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	15 per cent
Corso,	-	-	2
Consulate,	-	-	3

3d. Export of Live Stock, to bring in return Negroes, or Money.

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	5 per cent
Corso,	-	-	2
Consulate,	{ For a mule or horse,		1
	{ do. cattle or sheep,		1
	{ For other articles,		3

4th. Export of Live Stock, on condition of bringing in return implements of Agriculture, and household utensils.

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	15 per cent
Corso,	-	-	2
Consulate,	{ For a mule or horse,		1
	{ do. cattle or sheep,		1
	{ For other articles,		3

On Entrance.

1. Negroes pay neither royal nor municipal duty on entrance : see, however, the first, third and fourth articles of the following observations.

2d. Gold and silver pay nothing on their entrance ; other articles pay :

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	-	15 per cent
Corso,	-	-	-	2
Consulate,	-	-	-	3

3d. The introduction of negroes, gold, and silver, is exempt from all duties : see article 2d, 3d, and 4th, of the following observations.

4th. Implements of agriculture, cylinders, and plantation utensils pay :

Almoxarifazgo,	-	-	-	15 per cent
Corso,	-	-	-	2
Consulate,	-	-	-	3

Observations.

1. When produce is exported under condition of bringing negroes in return, but from the impracticability of procuring them in foreign colonies, its value has been returned in gold or silver, nine per cent almoxarifazgo is paid, to make up the complement of fifteen per cent which should have been paid on departure. If, in place of blacks, the value of the cargo has been employed in procuring implements of agriculture and plantation utensils, all the royal and municipal duties established on the entrance of these articles must be paid in addition.

2. When the produce of animals exported under condition of returning negroes, has been brought in gold or silver, the difference of *almojarifazgo* that would otherwise have been paid at departure, is not exacted. But if the return is made in implements of agriculture or household utensils, the difference is exacted, which is ten per cent more than the duties imposed on these articles at their entrance.

3. If part of the proceeds of animals or produce exported on condition of returning negroes, has been employed in purchase of a vessel, under the permission of the intendant for her introduction, the difference of *almojarifazgo* is collected only on the value of the produce, and not of the other articles. This is estimated in proportion to the sum exported, with which the sum employed in the purchase corresponds, taking the dollar of the colonies for the Spanish dollar. The vessel is entirely exempt from royal and municipal duties, by an order of the king, dated July the 25th, 1794.

4. Though a person should show that he has employed a part of the sum in repairing his vessel, or in defraying the expenses of his crew, the supplement of duty is still exacted. No exemption is permitted but for expenses of absolute necessity, such as the maintenance of the captain, storage, commissions, and others of a similar nature.

5. All provisions embarked for the support of the crew, and of passengers, are subject to the same royal and municipal duties, as if they were part of the

cargo, according to the declaration of the intendant, dated June 28, 1799.

6. Sugar embarked for the colonies, pays only the municipal duties of corso, and of the consulate, with one per cent land alcavala, to complete the amount of six per cent, agreeably to the same declaration.

7. Some officers of the custom-house, demanded of the intendancy whether the royal cedula of the 24th November, 1791, which permits the free introduction of negroes both to foreigners and Spaniards, should be regarded as ceasing to operate since the 21st December, 1797. The superior assembly of the finances decreed, on the 20th February, 1800, that the cedula preserves its validity with respect to Spaniards ; but that, according to the decision of S. M. C. foreigners must pay all the royal and municipal duties imposed on other articles, which make part of the commerce permitted with strangers.

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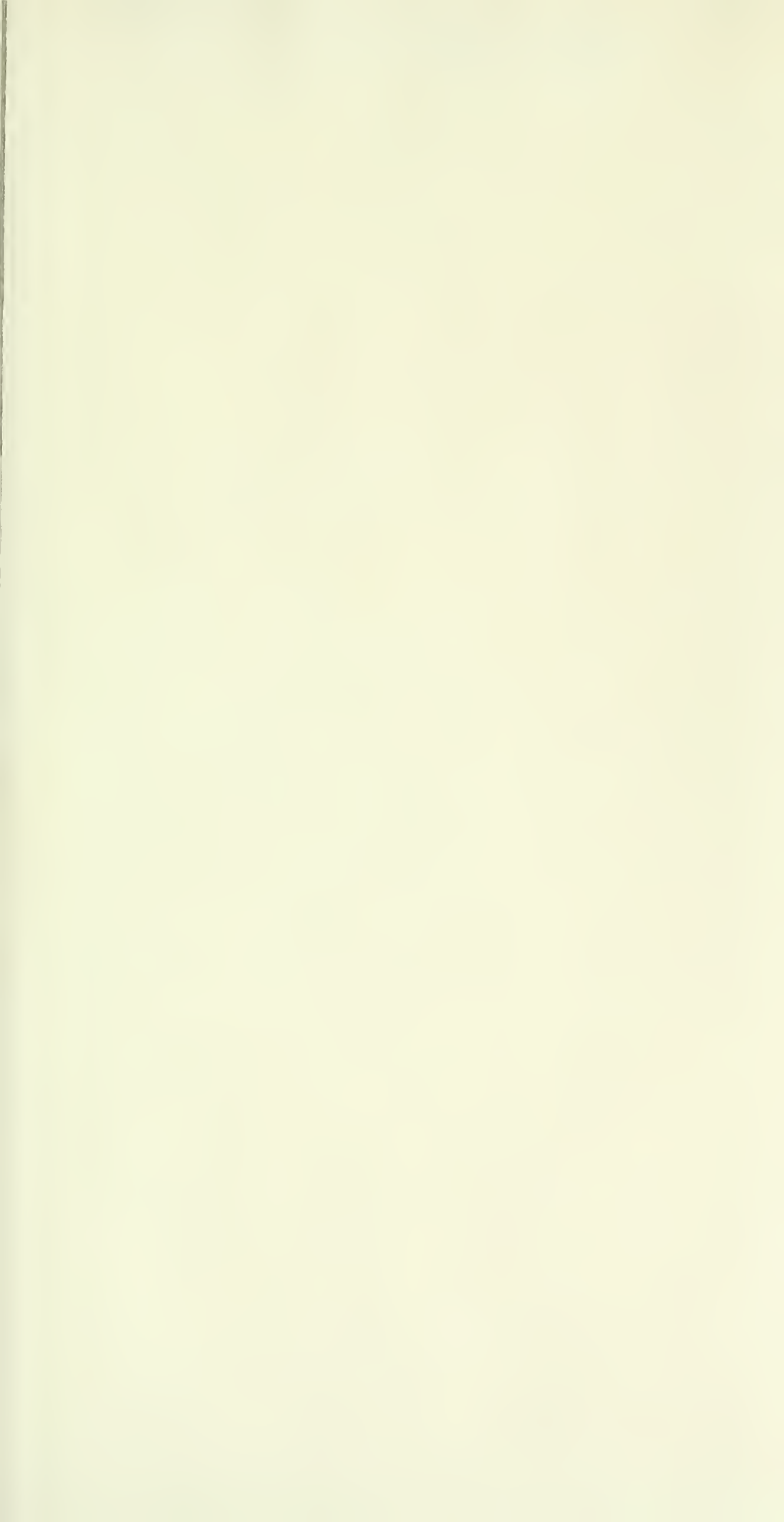
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